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NOTICE!

Unfavorable labor conditions, together with the shortage of paper, causing unavoidable delays, have forced us to consolidate the June and July issues of Smith's. With the August number out July 5th, we hope to resume our regular schedule of publication on the 5th of every month. Watch the news stands.

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No. 3

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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$2.00

SINGLE COPIES 20 CENTS

Monthly publication issued by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.
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 under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. Canadian subscription, \$2.36. Foreign, \$2.72.

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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 31

JUNE-JULY, 1920

Number 3

The Meddlesome Dead

By Josephine A. Meyer

Author of "Half a Man," "Her Own Kind," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

What the last will and testament of one Charles Cullen did to the lives of two of his heirs. An absorbing romance that we are delighted to present to the readers of SMITH'S.

CHAPTER I.

MISS CURTIS was ill.

The whole class was unconsciously aware of it. They did not know what was the matter, but they felt the spasmodic ebb and flow of her discipline.

At last the three o'clock bell rang. It might well have been the alarm for a revolutionary uprising. Any slight remnant of self-control was instantly relaxed, and to Miss Curtis, shivering with fever and aching miserably, her class seemed to dissolve at last in a particularly noisy blur.

Slowly she walked home.

There is no loneliness like that of one who is shy and ill among uninterested strangers. Phoebe Curtis was not the person to make friends in six months. She was beset by a freezing reserve.

Her father, broken in health and fortune, had moved East eight years ago. She had finished her education in the teachers' training school. It had been a struggle to see her through, and her efforts to hide her poverty and make the most of her time turned her into an unpopular grind. The unhappy sensitiveness of those days blunted her

power of friendship. But she was content. She lived in a world of the mind. Her ambition was to become instructor of history in high school. To this end she applied herself devotedly.

Men and women whom she met meant nothing to her except as population. She was not lacking in imagination, but confined it to the reconstruction of the past rather than the understanding of the present. She visualized and communed with her favorite historical characters with a sentimentality she would have denied furiously had any one charged her with it. She conceived her hero worship as something unusually chaste and noble. Love, birth, and marriage she put on a plane with cooking and bridge playing—occupations for the unintelligent.

A knock at the door awoke her. Her heart was beating wildly, and her head throbbed in accord.

"Coming!" she called with an effort.

For a moment she stood dazed by the pounding of pain in her temples, stiff and shivering in all her limbs. If she lit the gas it would disclose the rumpled bed. She opened the door.

"This is Miss Bonner," said the



"We thought you might be ill, so I came up to see."

"I? Ill! What made you think so?"

woman on the threshold. Phoebe recognized her as the occupant of the smaller back room, a middle-aged trained nurse who was away for weeks at a time. "We thought you might be ill, so I came up to see."

"I? Ill!" Phoebe had some cloudy idea that it was nicer to deny this.

But she hated to lie. Suddenly she felt Miss Bonner's cool fingers close alertly about her wrist.

"I'm not ill," she protested feebly.

"Your pulse says you are. You have fever. Come out here in the hall where I can have a look at you."

The glare of the hall light was like a stab through Phoebe's forehead.

"Head ache?" asked Miss Bonner.

"Yes, a little."

"Throat hurt?"

"I—I don't feel very well," admitted Phoebe conservatively.

"Come right into your room and let me put you to bed," ordered the nurse. "If you are not better to-morrow we will send for a doctor."

CHAPTER II.

Harvey Cullen Brewster, M. D., sat under the glare of the unflattering Welsbach light, eating his breakfast.

He had a bedroom and office and the daily use of the parlor as his waiting room in the narrow, three-storied house in which Mrs. Emmons let out lodgings.

From his surroundings it was plain that Doctor Brewster was not what is called an eminent practitioner. He was quite young, barely thirty-two, but that had less to do with this fact than that he had no desire to be one. Like Miss Phoebe Curtis, he had an ambition in life, and like her he was more interested in the ambition than in life. His patients were not even interesting cases to him, with the exception of a few who were endowed

with such extraordinary symptoms that they could not possibly recover. He was as chillingly blind to the drama of his fellow creatures as was Phoebe.

Harvey Brewster had gone through college intending to take up bacteriological research. His father, who had been a physician, too, had died when Harvey was in his senior year. The older Doctor Brewster had been successful in his profession, but improvident, and left practically no estate. Harvey's maternal uncle, James Lloyd, had put up money to "see him through," but it was plain Lloyd meant by this to see him through medical school so that he might take up his father's practice. After a struggle Harvey complied, but determined to go back to his research work when he had saved enough.

As he sat there under the gray light of the patent gas burner, Harvey was an insignificant enough figure. He was above medium height, but he stooped, a habit that made him look older as well as smaller. He had a high, sloping forehead, deep-set gray eyes, rather abstracted behind their gold-rimmed spectacles, and a jaw which, had it been a shade longer, would have been noticeably aggressive.

He sipped his weak coffee and ate his milky oatmeal without enthusiasm.

"Veevie! Vee—vie!" Mrs. Emmons' voice rose shrill above the sizzling. "There's the telephone and I can't leave this bacon."

Genevieve, Mrs. Emmons' twelve-year-old daughter, whose chief occupation was to make the beds before she went to school, was heard distantly clattering downstairs and, after an interval, her quick, noisy little feet attacked the flight that led to the basement.

"S for you, Doctor Brewster," she announced, and as she flew upstairs again before him, "Gee, I'm late this morning!"

But the beds had to be made up.

It never occurred to Harvey to pity the overworked child. If he noticed her peaked, pallid face or the bony shapelessness of her arms and legs he mechanically called up words like malnutrition or anæmia, but no more attempted to prescribe for her or give advice unasked than he would have advised or prescribed for a case in a report.

"Miss Bonner?" said Harvey at the phone. "Oh, good morning—oh—a friend of yours? . . . Where is that? . . . A boarding house. . . . Curtis—Miss or Mrs? That was right. . . . Tell her to stay in bed and I'll get there some time this morning. . . . Are you on the case? . . . Oh, I see. . . . All right—good-by."

When he got downstairs again he made a note of his telephone conversation and the address of the new patient.

Miss Bonner's case lived in a neighborhood that made her visit the fourth on his list. He was shown up the neat but tastelessly carpeted stairs to her room.

"This is Miss Curtis, Doctor Brewster," announced Miss Bonner, smiling.

He saw a flushed, anxious face and eyes dark and glittering with fever. He noted and forgot the luxuriance of her wavy hair. He took her pulse and respiration and, glancing up from his watch, scrutinized her.

When he had satisfied his professional curiosity, he pulled out a prescription pad and sat for a moment staring before him, without writing. His eye rested on a newspaper unfolded on her bed, where the nurse, who had been reading it, must have left it when she rose to let him in. His own name attracted and focused his attention, then the strange fact that his surname was separated by the other two and was attached to a woman's name, Agnes. Agnes was a family name, too—his grandmother's name.

He sat for a moment thinking, then resumed his interest.

"Well, then, have this made up." The doctor held out the prescription. "It's to be taken every three hours. And some one had better attend to her diet. That's important," he added.

"I'm not likely to be called out today, so I'll stay round and see to it," said Miss Bonner.

"Very well, call me up if you need me. I'll be around in the morning."

He left and went downstairs consulting his notebook, into which he entered his visit and diagnosis.

At the foot of the stoop he opened his morning paper and, glancing over its pages casually, he came upon the item which had drawn his attention while in Miss Curtis' room—an advertisement. He read:

If the heirs of Elinor Strong, daughter of John Cullen, of Peekskill, and of Agnes Brewster, daughter of Harvey Cullen, of same, will communicate with William Pine, of Pine & Wallace, Attorneys, Liberty Street, City, they will learn something to their advantage.

He tore out the announcement and put it in his pocket. Then he crumpled up the rest of the paper, which had grown bulky and unmanageable in the wind, and thrust it into a near-by ash can. He looked two or three times at the clipping in the course of the morning and had some trouble preventing himself from building air castles on the meager foundation it offered. He was not one to indulge much in fancies or daydreams, but it was some time before he was able to give his attention fully to his day's work.

Meantime Phoebe was passing querulous judgment on him to Miss Bonner.

"Very well, if you say so, he may see this case through, but after that, let me tell you, I shall never, never have anything to do with him again. I don't like him."

CHAPTER III.

When Doctor Brewster returned to his office at the end of his morning round of visits, he called up the firm of Pine & Wallace and made an appointment with Mr. Pine for an interview at four o'clock that afternoon.

According to his custom, he fulfilled it punctually to the minute.

Mr. Pine was tall and bony, with sparse and faded red hair. He welcomed Harvey with a warm handshake.

"I knew your uncle Charles so well," he said.

"Uncle Charles?" asked Harvey.

"No, he was your *cousin* Charles! These family trees! I'm speaking of Charles Cullen."

"Charles Cullen?"

"Exactly. Now, what was your father's full name, and your mother's?"

"My father's name was Richard Brewster, after his father. My mother's name was Gladys Lloyd."

"Have you any relatives on your father's side?"

"I believe so. My grandmother had cousins, but lost all track of them."

"Charles Cullen," said the lawyer impressively, "was one of those cousins. Elinor Strong was another."

"Yes?" Harvey raised his brows encouragingly, but Mr. Pine seemed content to have awakened his curiosity.

"Are you married?" he asked.

"No."

"What—ahem—of what faith are you?"

"Religion? I'm an agnostic."

The lawyer's frightened, vacuous smile broadened under the strain of remaining good-humored at this.

"Ah—really," he said. "Do you—er—do you believe in marriage?"

"As a public announcement of cohabitation, subject to the laws of the community, yes."

Mr. Pine staggered under the shock of this outspokenness.



"To believe you are serious would be insulting you; to believe you are anything else is insulting me, and I do not enjoy either alternative.
I can find my way out."

"Oh," he murmured deprecatingly, moistening his lips. "But—er—you *do* believe—that is, you don't object to the marriage ceremony?"

"Why do you ask me?" demanded Harvey, puzzled.

"I am not at liberty to say. Do you wish not to reply?"

"I have already replied. I believe in a civil ceremony."

"I am glad of that." Mr. Pine looked unaccountably gratified. "And I am sure, though you are reticent about it, that you feel with me that marriage needs something besides the civil ceremony to make it sacred and binding."

"I don't believe marriage is sacred and binding."

"Oh, I'm sure——"

"On the contrary. The possibility of divorce is the foundation of my belief in marriage."

"Why—why," fluttered Mr. Pine amiably, "now you are just talking—er—literature."

"No, I'm talking pathology. I have seen the effects of sacred and binding marriages."

"Oh, yes"—the lawyer fumbled with Harvey's card as a man paws at the log which is to save him from drowning—"you are a physician. Very interesting profession!"

"Do you think so?" asked Harvey. "I don't."

"Then, my dear boy, why practice it?"

"To make money."

"Very good, very good!" The lawyer laughed heartily at the joke and Harvey watched him with gloomy impassivity. "Well, well, well. Is there something else you would rather go in for? Music, for example?"

"I don't understand music."

"But then, what are your ambitions?"

Harvey scowled. He was not in the habit of speaking to every one of his life's object. Mr. Pine did not wait for his answer.

"Mr. Charles Cullen was a very wealthy man," he hinted. "He inherited not only from his father, but from his uncle, your great-grandfather. He was a peculiar man, a little headstrong, if I may say so, but thoroughly good. He died a bachelor and regretted the fact. It is in connection with his will, a rather unusual instrument, that I am seeking out his surviving relatives."

"Yes?" asked Harvey calmly.

"I may say no more about it. There are certain procedures—— However, I shall not lose track of you, and you will hear as soon as word comes from the other branch of the family. Proofs, too, have to be established. Nothing personal, you understand. And now, I won't detain you any longer."

Harvey nodded. Both men rose.

"I hope we shall get to know each other better," said Mr. Pine tenderly. "Meantime, good-by, Mr.—I mean Doctor—Brewster."

All the way uptown Harvey meditated on the chances of this interview leading to anything. In spite of his efforts to be skeptical, by the time he reached home, he was planning the sort of private laboratory he was going to build for himself.

"It all depends on how much I'll have to spend," he decided at last, as he mounted the shabby brownstone stoop on which the neighborhood children had been testing the decorative qualities of penny chalks.

He found his office and desk already occupied by a tall, slender, good-looking man, absorbed in the evening paper. This person looked younger than the doctor, partly because of the collegiate style of dress he affected, the backward sweep of his long, blond hair, and the amused light unflinchingly present in his quick, observant blue eyes.

"Hello, Bugs. You're late," he announced.

"Get out of here, Jerry, till I get through."

"Oh, I just dropped in to ask you to come out to a show."

"Who, me?"

"I knew you'd look like that. Mother asked me to, because she thinks you're overworking, and Syb dared me to. So now I can go about my business." He rose and stretched his long arms and made for the door.

"Oh, Jerry, hold on! Go up to my room and wait. I'll go with you."

"You will? Well, I'm damned! What's the big idea?"

"I've got something important to tell you."

"You're married!"

"Heaven forgive you, never! Go on."

Harvey opened the folding door to devote his attention to his waiting patients.

Harvey's bedroom was over his office.

It was here he found his cousin when at last his evening's work was done. Gerald lay asleep on the bed.

When Harvey touched him he started.

"Lord!" he exclaimed, "you've been an age. What time is it?"

"Seven-thirty."

"We've a fine chance to get into a show now if we're going to eat anything first."

"Let's just eat instead. I want to talk."

"The night is yours."

Gerald Lloyd was so different from Harvey that their liking for each other seemed impossible to credit. The secret of their companionship was that they did not bore each other by overindulging in it.

Over the dinner table Harvey showed him the newspaper clipping and told him of his interview with the lawyer. Gerald, who had a sentimental distaste for acknowledging the importance of matters financial pretended to be disgusted when Harvey insisted upon spec-

ulating on the amount of money that might be coming to him.

"You are the last person I should expect to find mercenary!" he exclaimed. "You—a physician! What has a man got when he loses his health?"

"Often the means to get it back. Those I treat generally have not, so they go on increasing the general average of invalidism."

"Do you expect to inherit enough money to subsidize the decrepit poor?"

"Don't you know me well enough to know I want to eradicate, not treat, disease?"

"How? Educate the masses?"

"Some. But educate the doctors more."

"Well, well, well! What's this?"

"I'm stating what every one knows. We need research—experiment. We're just stumbling along in the dark, as things are. If we could only study our cases instead of wasting time patching them up into ostensible cures, we might get somewhere. Well, I suppose it's natural for people to expect to buy health from a physician. But how much of it have I sold to-day?"

"Good Lord! Don't you ever think of people in anything but terms of disease?"

"It's my living."

"Bah, that's not living! I only hope, for your own good, that if you do get any money out of that will, it's left to you only on condition that you study human beings instead of beastly bugs!"

They walked back together to Harvey's lodging.

CHAPTER IV.

The next day Phoebe was much better and scandalized Miss Bonner by asking her to telephone to Doctor Brewster not to come.

"It's the doctor's business to discharge the case," deprecated the nurse with the air of explaining a solecism. "Why, what would he think of me!"



"We're pretty foolish," mused Harvey, after a pause. "We're turning down over a million and a half dollars because neither of us has the sense to see the sentimentality of our act."

Privately Phoebe didn't care what he thought, but she did not say so.

Miss Bonner made her patient ready for the doctor's visit. Then she sat down and, taking up the paper which Phoebe had delivered to her every morning, began to read.

"My!" she exclaimed, "here's a coincidence! Here's Doctor Brewster's name in the paper. Wouldn't it be funny if he was coming into money or something?" And she read out:

If the heirs of Elinor Strong, daughter of John Cullen, of Peckskill, and of Agnes Brewster, daughter of—

"My grandmother's name was Elinor Strong," interrupted Phoebe, astonished. "It was Elinor Cullen before she was married and she came from Peckskill. Do you suppose that this has anything to do with me?"

Doctor Brewster's visit put an end to an exciting conference. He had no power to annoy Phoebe that day. He was as insignificant and easily forgotten as her breakfast, or any other incident that had no direct bearing on the writing of her letter, containing all that she remembered of her family tree, to Mr. William Pine.

The next day Mr. Pine phoned that he would be up the day after, to see her. She was well enough then to be up, and to have had the satisfaction of hearing Doctor Brewster discharge her case.

The lawyer was shown into her room, where she detained Miss Bonner as chaperon, a proceeding which secretly endeared her to Mr. Pine.

"I'm sorry you've been ill," he began. "I have your letter, and it seems perfectly satisfactory. I shall merely have to ask you, for form's sake, if you happen to have any proofs here."

Phoebe showed him her mother's marriage certificate and a daguerreotype of her great-grandmother.

"Her name," she explained, "was Mary Eastman."

"Quite right," assented the lawyer genially. "Mary Eastman married John Cullen. Do you know if they had any other children besides your grandmother, Elinor Cullen Strong?"

"Two or three boys. Only one lived—my great-uncle, Charles. After my grandmother moved West she continued to write to him for a while, but gave it up a few years before she died. Then we lost track of the Eastern branch of the family completely."

"So you are the only survivor of your mother's line?"

"Unless that great-uncle is alive or has a family."

"Charles Cullen? No. He died a bachelor—and very wealthy. It is his will I am about to execute."

"Yes?" asked Phoebe.

"It is an unusual instrument—the idea of an erratic, but charming old gentleman whom I am honored to have known so intimately. Well"—he rose and extended his hand—"I won't excite the invalid any further to-day. I shall let you know when to come down to my office."

But Phoebe was teaching a week before the looked-for summons arrived. The letter making the appointment came at breakfast, and she was conscious of a thrill when she beheld the letterhead. Miss Bonner was on a case out of town, and Phoebe was not sure whether to be glad or sorry at this.

At school Phoebe had companions who, while not entirely answering to her exacting definition of the word "friend," were closer to her than the commonplace though kindly Miss Bonner could ever hope to be. These were the three other teachers who ate lunch with her every day—aloof, shy women, as consciously ladylike and cultured as herself. They enjoyed each other's society and the safe refinement of their common point of view and sense of humor. Phoebe, restored to health, had given them a description of her

illness and her physician that was not without flavor. Her account, though witty, lacked the warmth of personalities, however. It was almost scholarly.

Now, when she had the lawyer's letter before her, she had no one in whom to confide the fact that he had actually appointed the next day for her to meet the other heirs of Charles Cullen and hear the will read. In the lunch room that noon she came near telling her co-workers of her good luck.

"I'm going to be absent to-morrow," she began. "It's ruining my class."

"Too bad," commented Miss Styles with well-bred lack of curiosity.

"Only death or marriage would part me from my demons this end of the term," declared Miss Hearn tactfully.

"You were away a week while you were ill," put in Miss Potter, who felt it her duty always to record the obvious.

"I am thinking of taking a leave of absence," Phoebe said offhandedly.

"You are going to be married?" suggested Miss Hearn facetiously.

"Some one has left you a fortune," guessed Miss Styles.

Their ready badinage put a check on Phoebe's confidences. She turned them off with a light laugh, interpreted by the élite as a most polite invitation to mind one's own business.

"It's law, not medicine, this time," she declared.

CHAPTER V.

Phoebe's appointment with Mr. Pine was for twelve o'clock. To one accustomed to the exigencies of school time this was an unheard-of hour. She started downtown too soon, on the crest of a belief that it was more proper and businesslike to be early than late. When several Maiden Lane jewelers' clocks, confirmed by the Trinity tower, informed her with scandalized faces that it was only half past eleven, she became panic-stricken with the thought that be-

ing so prompt might imply an indelicate eagerness for her money.

She took a walk to pass the time, but was afraid to venture far in that alien territory and so found that time was reluctant to pass. Convinced at last that it was considered neither morbid nor bold to enter Trinity Churchyard, she took refuge there.

She kept one uneasy eye on the tower and, until five minutes of twelve, cherished the illusion that she had made up her mind to be late. When that illusion finally cleared, she hurried out into the noon-flooded streets.

As she entered the office building of Pine & Wallace she noticed inattentively something familiar in the carriage of a man in front of her. She recognized him when they got into the elevator together. It was Doctor Brewster.

She did not wish to speak to him so she pretended she did not see him and, as the elevator rapidly filled, soon put a wall of humanity between them.

She felt safe only after the door of the lawyer's outer office closed behind her. A boy took her name to a selective clerk, partitioned off near by, and this young man took her to the portion of the suite fenced off for Mr. Pine and distinguished from most of the other open stalls by its door, which bore its only sign of superior privacy. The clerk knocked on this door and they were told to enter. Phoebe saw Mr. Pine, large and bland, seated at a large and bland oak table desk. He rose as she entered, and a man who was seated near him rose, too. Her first thought on perceiving the latter was the animosity of one whose health has been impeached. So that was why Doctor Brewster was here—to testify to her physical condition!

"Ah," Mr. Pine was saying, "you are both punctual! It is a marvel you did not run into each other. Miss Curtis, this is Doctor Brewster—er—a distant cousin of yours."

"A cousin?" repeated Miss Curtis.

"I didn't know it when I treated you," reassured Doctor Brewster.

"I hardly believe it would make any difference in your treatment, either for better or worse," smiled the lawyer. "For though you are both heirs, no violence to either of you would give

the other an advantage. The estate has been left to both of you on condition that you are willing and able to administer it together."

"Together?" repeated the heirs.

"I am glad," proceeded the lawyer with the enjoyment of one possessed of a good vocabulary, who has been elected to break startling news, "I am glad you have met before. I cannot doubt that with two people so richly endowed with intelligence"—bow to Harvey—"and charm"—a bow to Phoebe—"to have become acquainted was to have become—er—good friends. We have, I may say, a basis on which to erect what otherwise might have seemed an extravagant if not perilous relationship."

Phoebe and Harvey turned upon him their silent, startled faces, with a sort of frozen attentiveness.

"Mr. Charles Cullen," began Mr.

Pine once more, resorting to an old gambit, "was an extraordinary gentleman. He had peculiarities which rendered him, if I may say so, both difficult and lovable. The will"—the familiar characterization seemed to buoy and steady him—"is a remarkable instrument, and you two are the only heirs to a vast estate—a very vast estate."



A voice said: "Why, it's open!" and in came Miss Bonner, back from her case. She stared a moment, then hastily tried to pass, hiding only partially her expression of lively jubilation.

The lips of the heirs twitched.

"It is yours," continued Mr. Pine impressively, "only on the condition I have previously hinted at, that you administer and benefit from it—together."

But he could draw no responses.

"By 'together,'" continued Mr. Pine, finding that not only was there no need to break the matter to this phlegmatic pair, but, if he wanted to arouse any sensation at all, he must spring it on them, "by 'together' I mean that Mr. Charles Cullen—a bachelor himself, but a strong advocate of matrimony—refers definitely to the existence of the marriage tie between his beneficiaries."

Neither of the beneficiaries stirred. On their faces could be seen a slight deepening of the reproach with which they discredited their ears.

"In other words," finished the lawyer, exhausted into simplicity, "an estate valued roughly at one million six hundred thousand dollars is bequeathed to the granddaughter of Elinor Strong and the grandson of Agnes Brewster on condition that they are both alive and unmarried at the time of the execution of the will, and that they agree to marry, the evident purpose being to reestablish the old family and traditions of the Cullens. In the event of their refusing, the whole estate goes to various charitable and religious organizations."

The two heirs withdrew their eyes from Mr. Pine to exchange one hostile and accusing glance. The expression of Harvey's chin and mouth proved him to be indignantly speechless, so Phoebe risked a remark.

"Mr. Pine and Doctor Brewster, I presume this—this joke is over. So"—and she rose with dignity—"I wish you good day."

"Wait!" exclaimed Mr. Pine. "You can't go off like that—without any decision at all."

"To believe you are serious would be insulting you; to believe you are anything else is insulting me, and I do

not enjoy either alternative. I can find my way out." She stepped toward the door, but Mr. Pine intercepted her.

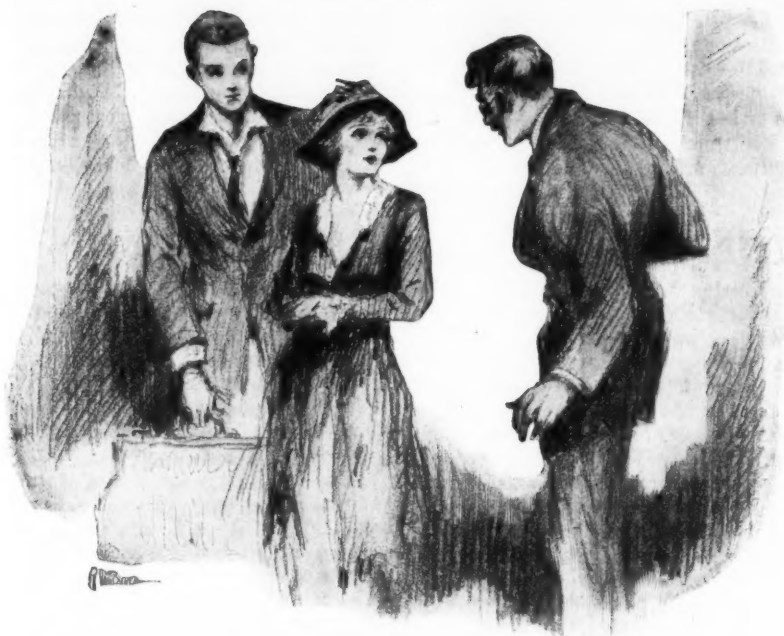
"My dear young lady!" he exclaimed. "Get all this nonsense about insults out of your head. This is your grandfather's—granduncle—cousin—oh, the devil!—your deceased relative's will. It is here on the desk. I am about to read it to you word for word as he had it written. It is an extraordinary—an amazing instrument, but it is entirely legal. You are free to reject its provisions if you like, but it is not proper nor respectful to call it insulting. No affront was intended, I who knew him well can assure you. Perhaps a word or two from me on the conditions under which he made it would not be amiss. Some years before he died he became deeply interested in the genealogy of the Cullens. He traced the family down to what it is to-day, and, though unknown to you, knew of both of you. His object was to bring branches of the family together. He suggests, though he does not specify it, that after your marriage you drop the name of Brewster and retain the family name of Cullen."

"Miss Curtis," spoke up Harvey at last, "I for one believe Mr. Pine is incapable of a joke, even of a poor one; so let us respect his earnestness. It will be interesting, at any rate, to listen to the actual words of this nonsense written by a relative common to us both. Besides," he added, "Mr. Pine has undoubtedly some suggestion to make, such as contesting the will."

"Impossible!" returned the lawyer.

"None the less, you have undoubtedly thought of a loophole," suggested Harvey.

"None," answered the lawyer obstinately. Then, seeing Phoebe turn to the door again, added quickly, "that is——" His pink face became a richer crimson; he fingered the manuscript of the will with the downcast eyes and



"A trunk?" Harvey peered at her uncertainly through his glasses. With his bewildered expression he looked like a reprimanded schoolboy. Charity demanded that he be given a reassuring smile.

hurt expression of a pure man interpreting a difficult question of morality. "This will states that you are to marry and to become known to the world as Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Cullen Brewster or preferably, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Cullen. It—makes no specific reference to the necessity of your"—he lowered his voice—"being married in anything but name only. Now, far be it from me to suggest to you anything opposed to your ideals, but though you are both young, you are not in the first extravagant flush of youth, and you realize that perhaps every third marriage, particularly every third successful marriage, has been contrived on grounds not utterly dissimilar from this."

"Do you mean to say that one third of the married population are not living together?" demanded Harvey.

"Bless me, no! What I mean is, that most of the best marriages are arranged without passion. They are a formation of partnership for the enjoyment of some special privilege of wealth or social prestige—exactly what this would be."

"Read the will," said Harvey abruptly.

"Sit down, Miss Curtis," begged the lawyer, and added musingly, "one million six hundred thousand—approximately. As it is at present invested, it yields something like eighty thousand dollars per annum."

It would be untrue to state that a full realization of the power and extent of that income overcame Phoebe, whose yearly earnings were nearer eight hundred dollars, but the point is, after a second's hesitation, she sat down.



They stood leaning over the rail again. Then she heard herself speak painfully, tragically.

"You must go away at once. We must never see each other again!"

CHAPTER VII.

"I suppose," said Phoebe at last, aggressively, "you think because I am a woman I have no special object or ambition in my life."

"If I had bothered to think about it at all I probably should have come to that conclusion," said Harvey.

"And that it is easy for me to relinquish all thought of Charles Cullen's money because I have no particular use for it."

"That I can't say. People don't think up a use for money before they desire it."

She shut her mouth firmly as if she had decided not to go on, and a dull

and somewhat belated perception of his churlishness led him to add:

"I suppose in summing up your use for it, I'd take a leaf out of your book and say you wanted it for what you said I wanted it. To loaf—to quit teaching. Am I right?"

"You think that is an ambition?"

"You thought it was mine."

"Well, it isn't mine."

"What would you do?"

"Study history. Travel and study."

She lapsed into silence.

"You couldn't do much in Europe for a while yet."

"I could prepare. You probably despise my ambition. But it's more

important than yours. It will lead to the cure of political and social diseases. The average person knows so little of history it's a wonder we make any progress at all. We don't make much. The European war is simply a terrible mistake in history, made by people too ignorant to learn, or wantonly taught wrong."

"I confess I don't know much about history. As far as I'm concerned, in the beginning God created Columbus." He saw her color deepen as she looked down. The reference had offended her. "Of course," he added, "biologically I go back æons, to a world of simple cells which you don't believe in."

"Why don't I?"

"I was afraid you didn't. I'm glad you do."

"Why?"

He was unable to say. He wanted her to be liberal because it might mean a willingness to do the unusual, and yet was he himself really willing?

"I'm giving up a laboratory and the leisure to make it count. And you are giving up something you believe is as important. We are doing negatively what people so often do positively, letting marriage interfere with the real work of the world."

"I suppose so," she assented, and shivered, for the wind had risen to remind them that, after all, it was March.

"Let us walk," he suggested.

They rose and walked slowly toward the city building.

"Are we so wrong?" Phoebe demanded suddenly. "Marriage is the most sacred thing in the world."

"Do you mean that if you'd fallen in love and married you'd have given up your work?"

"No, no. I never intended to marry. I never thought of it. But I'd rather give up all idea of marriage than think of giving up—my hopes and ambitions."

"To give ourselves up to our chosen work we have only to pledge ourselves

never to wed. That's what it amounts to. If the money had been left to us with *that* stipulation I should not have hesitated, should you?"

"No. I'm sure I should not. But that is different. This would be wrong."

"No, not wrong, merely extraordinary. We are afraid of doing something strange. Or rather, something usual in a new way."

They had rounded the west wing of city hall. Down a slanting, paved pathway there was a door, and on it a neatly printed sign that arrested their eyes forcibly, and struck them both dumb.

MARRIAGE LICENSES.

"Do you really think we'll regret the chance we are giving up?" asked Phoebe in a strained voice.

"Let us make the regret impossible. Here, now, before we have time to think," said Harvey breathlessly. "Here I promise you solemnly never to take advantage of our relationship other than my share of the money we get from it." He held out his hand. Her hand came swiftly, fleetingly, coldly into his, and they walked down the paved causeway and through the fateful door.

They found themselves one of five couples in an intolerable atmosphere of stereotyped congratulation. The guard, on the outlook for happy tips, beamed coyly at his victims as he directed them about.

"We can tear it up when we get outside," Harvey muttered to Phoebe when they received their permission to marry. Three of the other couples, at least, were indulging in the same thought.

But they didn't do it—any of them.

When they got out, they stood for a moment in the March sun, then crossed to the other side of Broadway, turning south, with some hazy remembrance that they had a date to keep with the lawyer at half past one. There was

still lots of time, so they sauntered along, unable to speak together, their awkwardness and constraint growing.

"We're not really married, you know," said Harvey at last, heavily. He was electrified by her answer, which came back sharp and unmistakable.

"I wish we were!" she said.

They stopped dead, staring miserably at each other.

"We'll never get to this point again," she went on nervously. "What we have already suffered will count for nothing, I know. If we give up now, I shall lose my last shreds of self-respect. It's—it's bad enough to do something disreputable, but it's worse to half do it, because you're too cowardly to finish it."

"I agree. Let's settle it all now. We can find a justice of the peace at the city hall. Let's go back."

"Justice of the peace?"

"This is done by law courts *for* law courts," said Harvey. "There's a jeweler's shop. Is a ring an essential?"

"I don't know."

"We'll have one, anyway. We can't afford to botch this now. Wait here."

He entered the jeweler's shop, conscious of being short of breath and prone to fidget with his wallet. Presently he came forth, one hand in his coat pocket, and a slightly embarrassed look on his face.

They were married in the city hall by a stout Irishman who looked like a detective and who, although he read some portions of the service with a religious tremolo, slurred over others with an inconsequence which suggested that, deep in his heart, he shared Harvey's skepticism of the sanctity of the marriage rites.

They showed up in the offices of Pine & Wallace five minutes late for their appointment. As she went up in the elevator for the third time that day, in company with Harvey Brewster, Phoebe thrilled with both fear and amazement at what she had done.

Mr. Pine received them instantly.

"Well," he began cautiously, a little subdued by the sight of their faces, "did you enjoy your lunch?"

"No," answered Harvey.

"I had hoped you would," apologized the lawyer. "I had hoped it would help you to a decision."

"It did," answered Harvey. But Phoebe held up her hand before Pine could continue. It was her left hand, and ungloved.

"We're married," she said calmly.

The lawyer literally fell into his chair.

"My God!" he said in a heavy whisper.

CHAPTER VIII.

Gerald Lloyd looked up in astonishment as Harvey entered his office.

"Hello, what's the matter? Have your patients struck?"

"No, I happened to be in Liberty Street, so I stopped in here."

"Liberty Street? What for?"

"Legacy chasing."

"Oh, the will." Gerald looked both enlightened and eager. "Good! What did you get out of it?"

"Enough," said Harvey grimly.

"You don't look very happy about it," commented Gerald. "Did he leave you any money at all?"

"Yes, quite a lot."

"What's the matter, then? Conditions impossible?"

"They've been overcome."

"You look as if you'd been through hell overcoming them."

"I have. I'm married."

"What! When?"

"To-day in the city hall by a J. P. somewhere between twelve-thirty and one."

"Why—why—I never even suspected you were engaged! *You!* It can't be!" contradicted Gerald with finality.

"I wasn't engaged, I was married, I'm telling you."

"You mean—an elopement?"

"I don't know the technical name for it. Pine called it a marriage of convenience before we did it, and an outrageous bit of buffoonery afterward. Well, it's done anyway."

"I wonder if you know just how nutty you sound and look?" speculated Gerald. "Come out and have a drink."

"No, I've no time. Here's the case briefly. I had to marry some one my uncle picked out in order to inherit his money. Don't tell me it sounds like the plot of a comic opera; I know it."

"Oh, can the bull!" said Gerald.

"It's truth, Jerry. I met the girl before, professionally, once or twice. All I know about her is that she has a set of tonsils that will give her trouble some day if she doesn't have them out. I suppose that's more than some bridegrooms know about their wives, at that. Well, she was the old man's grandniece, and the will provides that we should marry to share the Cullen fortune. We went out to lunch to talk it over and decided it was an emergency case, so we shut our eyes, clasped hands, and took the leap together. We expected Pine, the lawyer, to welcome us with a blessing and a check. Nothing of the kind. Our wedding was too private for him. He says we've got to be known as Mr. and Mrs Harvey Cullen Brewster. And now we have to be married all over again, preferably at the Ritz-Carlton, or Trinity Church, where publicity runs high."

"Well, what do you get for all this?"

"A million and a half. We've earned the million already. If we could stop now we'd give up the rest, but it seems we can't. Neither of us ever had any desire to marry any one, not even——"

"Wait, Buggy. You've knocked me dumb. Did you say a million and a half dollars?"

"Eighty thousand dollars a year to do with what we like. So we're going to divide it."

"Forty thousand dollars a year! And

likely as not you'll blow it all in on germs!" groaned Jerry.

"It's the only excuse for my getting it. But you shall have a present, Jerry, and so shall aunt Clara if you'll fix this up for us. To-day's wedding is a dead secret. To-night I shall take Miss Curtis—my wife—I'll really have to find out her Christian name, I've forgotten it—well, anyway, to-night I'll take her to meet my family and announce my engagement. Then you must get your mother to invite her up to see you often for the next couple of weeks, to help her get a trousseau and have dinner parties and all that. Then we marry in a church or something public, and our duty's done. After that we need only meet at the lawyer's at coupon-clipping seasons."

"Does she agree to this?"

"Of course. Break the news gently to aunt Clara. You can tell her we've both come into money, but don't say how. I've got to go now, old scout. I'll see you all to-night."

"Hold on," called Gerald, as he was going out, "I have a million questions!"

"Save them till later, Jerry."

"But, Bugs! What about her? Give me some sort of a line on her. What am I going to tell mother?"

"She's a teacher."

"No!"

"Yes."

"Hard luck, old man! Well, I suppose there's no more to be said. I'll help you all I can. Count on me. Good-by."

About half past eight that evening Harvey ascended the stoop of Phoebe's boarding house and rang the bell. His mind was occupied with the thought of Genevieve Emmons. Mrs. Emmons had encountered him on his way out with, "Doctor Brewster, when you're through, will you look at Veevie?" And he had looked. It was the first time he had really seen Veevie though he had added to her daily labor for

three years, and he suffered something of a shock. Three years! He had the grace to wonder what his ambitions, his ideals, his wish to help humanity were worth when they were accompanied by a blindness that permitted a child directly under his observation, to reach her present dangerous physical condition through neglect. It occurred to him that he had a debt to pay before he began to build his laboratory.

When Phoebe's landlady at last opened the door to let him in, he was planning some means of getting Genevieve to the country where she might find rest and fresh air and proper nourishment, so his bow was even more than usually preoccupied.

The Lloyds owned and lived in a neat, old-fashioned brownstone house in the west Eighties. It was unpretentious, but comfortable, and furnished with a taste that had once been good.

Mrs. Lloyd was in keeping. She was stout, rosy, and gray-haired, and wore what had served her for the past four years as her next-best dress. Her jewelry was quietly massive. Although her brown eyes showed the agitation caused by her son's announcement, they were kind and welcoming. She loved Harvey, chiefly because he was a poor orphan with no kin, and she fancied him to be both lonely and helpless. Sybil, her daughter, three years younger than Gerald, was tall and athletic. She favored men's clothes and women's clubs. She had some little contempt for both Gerald and Harvey, the former because he preferred life to books, the latter because he preferred books to life, but both because they were not making the success she would have made, she was sure, had she been a man.

Gerald impressed Phoebe first as a very tall, very good-looking, very young man, with a manner of staring at her that awakened in her a hitherto entirely undreamed-of kind of self-conscious-

ness. It was something that made her want him to see she was utterly indifferent to him. She was startled at the delightful tingling sensation that flooded through her when, with a corner of her eye, she beheld him lean over Harvey and overheard him murmur admiringly, "My Lord, Bugs, why didn't you tell me she was a peach?"

Then she was attacked by a sudden revulsion. The unreality of her being here, the falseness of her position, a dread of changes and adventures still in store for her, made her feel dazed and unhappy.

Her eyes rested for a moment on her husband's moody figure. Against her will they then glanced swiftly at the young man beside him. Again he was looking at her, and again she was disturbed by an unreasonable flutter in beholding a strange, bright ardor in his gaze.

CHAPTER IX.

Phoebe was grateful at least for the fact that Miss Bonner was away. She shuddered to think to what confidences she might have been led that night after Harvey brought her back to her house. He had not been a talkative escort.

Once, he had said rather abstractedly, "I hope Pine doesn't hold us up too long on our first payments. Meantime, do you know of any one living in the country who would be willing to look after a young girl. Some place where she would have nothing to do and lots to eat?"

"No," answered Phoebe, and then to make conversation, rather than because she was interested, "Is she a patient?"

"Well, in a way. She's my landlady's daughter," answered Harvey. "I'm afraid she'll be ill if she stays in town."

Phoebe had no suggestions with which to nourish their conversation, and so it died.

She concluded to keep her "engagement" a secret from her fellow board-

ers, but decided to tell the members of her lunch club at school. At least she would let them have a judicious amount of truth.

"Did you enjoy your holiday?" asked Miss Potter.

"I have news for you," said Phoebe.

"About the will?" guessed Miss Hearn. "You're an heiress!"

"Oh, that"—Phoebe's confusion gave color to her otherwise bad acting—"yes—I'm an heiress—but that's not my news. I'm—I'm engaged."

"Engaged!" exclaimed Miss Styles, her whole thin face alight with the romance her soul kept hidden: "Why—this—this is a surprise! And delightful! I wish you every happiness!"

"Maybe there wasn't a will at all," put in Miss Potter coquettishly, "except *his*!"

"May we know his name?"

Phoebe wondered if she had ever mentioned it to them before. With a prayer that it might be strange to them she told them.

"Brewster—Har—Harvey Brewster."

"What a distinguished name! Mrs. Harvey Brewster." Miss Styles fondled it in prospect.

"He isn't a lawyer?" suggested Miss Hearn playfully. "Or"—in exaggerated horror—"a doctor?"

"He's—he's a—a bacteriologist," stammered Phoebe, "yes, he's known as Doctor Brewster."

"Maybe one reason Miss Curtis was so hard on her physician was because she was comparing him with her own ideal," smiled Miss Styles.

"Is he handsome?" asked Miss Potter.

"No," answered Phoebe hastily, and at that instant the vision of a tall, blond youth with disquieting eyes flashed through her mind. Vaguely she felt something had slipped by her, lost forever, something dear and precious, whose passing was tragedy. She could hardly stand this atmosphere of re-

finéd raillery, of unawakened emotion, this thin, maidenly shadow of life. What had happened to her?

This was not the only inkling she had of the changes in store for her, changes distinct from those wrought directly through the effects of her marriage and the acquisition of wealth. She gave up her school work, she prepared to separate entirely from those who had been her companions at her boarding house, and she moved familiarly among people who had been strangers to her a week before. Mr. Pine had given her money for a trousseau, and she made a feint at buying pretty clothes and taking tea at extravagant little restaurants downtown. She and Harvey and the Lloyds went to theaters and parties.

But all these new ways counted for little when compared with the amazing spiritual revolution that had taken place within her. She saw her old personality dying out, resisting disintegration, but fading no less swiftly. Those characteristics she thought inherently her own, marks, in fact, of her superiority, began to dissolve. She distrusted and attempted to despise this new Phoebe, but found herself exulting in her, too, comparing herself with what she had been, aware of possessing something that the former Phoebe Curtis might envy. When she tried to define what it was, the nearest she could come to it was that she was about to lose something precious that she had never before dreamed of possessing. Specifically, it was that bright, eagle look of Gerald Lloyd's whenever they met, and, naturally, of late their meetings had been frequent. She went so far as to admit to herself that he admired her, and she had altered enough to allow herself to take warm satisfaction from this fact. She pretended she still thought it silly for a man to notice what she wore, or that her hair was pretty. None the less she found herself choos-

ing her new dresses in the colors Gerald had declared most becoming to her, and in the course of a week she had abandoned her hair net.

One evening when she was at the Lloyds' for dinner, Harvey, who was still attending to his unfinished cases, was called away to a patient. Gerald offered to see Phoebe home. It was a mild night and they agreed to walk, although the distance was not short. Gerald slipped her arm through his so naturally that she felt no objection.

"I wish," he began quite suddenly at one time, "I had been your cousin."

"My cousin? Why?"

He pressed her arm against his side, and she was mortified with herself for noticing this. Surely it was an accident!

"Poor Harvey," he said finally. "And," he added softly, "won't you say 'Poor Jerry?'"

"But—why? I don't understand."

"I know you are married already. Harvey told me."

She could not at first believe he really had said it. And then she could not connect it with what he had said before. It was staggeringly impertinent, and she was sure if she could grasp it fully she would be furiously indignant. As it was, she was merely dazed, and somehow elated. She tried to draw her hand from his arm. He pressed it closer.

At last they reached the steep, iron-railed stoop, mounted it, and passed without incident through the dimly lit vestibule into the hall.

"Good night." She held out her hand.

He helped himself to both her hands without a word, and drew her gently closer. Trembling, she made herself believe it was his strength and not her weakness that forced her toward him. She closed her eyes, felt the stir of his breath on her cheek, and then as quickly as he did, drew back as a key fumbled its way into the door.

A voice said: "Why, it's open!" and in came Miss Bonner, back from her case, loaded down with an umbrella, a paper package, a hand bag, a suit case, and some sketchily-bound branches of forsythia. She stared a moment, then hastily tried to pass, hiding only partially her expression of lively jubilation.

"Hello, Phoebe dear, I'm back. I'll see you later, I hope," she remarked in high spirits, and bumped, scraped, and grazed her burdened way upstairs.

"Good night," said Gerald softly, when she had gone, and again he held out both his hands. But Phoebe had been rudely jarred; she backed stiffly toward the stairs.

"Good night," she said over her shoulder, and retreated upward.

When she reached the next landing she heard the front door slam. She peeped over the banisters to be sure he was not still hiding in the hall. Miss Bonner's voice, delighted and insinuating, recalled her to her senses.

"Oh, Phoebe! I don't blame you! He's a prince!"

Before she went to bed she had the pleasure of trying to explain in her most commonplace manner the provisions of Charles Cullen's will. She suppressed all names until Miss Bonner beamingly assumed that the tall young man in the hall was the hero.

"But he isn't. There's nothing romantic about it," she retorted, trying to keep her temper. "The hero, as you call him, is the last man in the world for the part. It's your horrid, sullen boor of a doctor—Doctor Harvey Cullen Brewster."

"Oh, don't kid me!"

CHAPTER X.

They were married in church at a fashionable hour. Their second wedding was replete with all the ceremonious trappings that had been absent from their first. The bride wore white satin and carried a shower bouquet with

lilies of the valley in it; the groom looked unexpectedly well in the conventional cutaway. Sybil was a bridesmaid and Gerald was the best man, and Mr. Pine, as a sort of guardian, gave away the bride with vacuous solemnity.

There was a small wedding breakfast, with considerable rice-throwing after it and, at last, the comedy was over and they were in an indefinitely westbound train. Their plan was to go together as far as Philadelphia, where Phoebe would change to a southern train in order to spend a few days in Washington. Harvey intended to remain for a week in Philadelphia, where he intended visiting men interested in various lines of bacteriological research, and from there he would proceed to Johns Hopkins.

"Well," said Harvey, "we've earned it."

For the first time in two weeks he looked at her critically and, impressed with her pallor, reached over and pressed the inquiring tips of his fingers to her pulse.

"I'm all right," she declared. "Only tired. You are right. We have earned it. It's been a horrible fortnight, and to-day was the worst of all."

"It was worse for you than for me all round," conceded Harvey sympathetically. "As for to-day, church never meant much to me, but I can see how all that must have upset you."

"I—feel—wicked," she confessed.

"I feel guilty, and that's just as bad. If we were running off on a honeymoon without any marriage ceremony at all, I don't suppose I'd consider myself as reprehensible as I do now, going with you on this innocent trip with two to our credit. Well, cheer up. We've got what we set out for. We're rich. I've used some of my wealth already."

"Yes."

"And the family seat at Peekskill. Pine told me I had to consult you first, but I knew you'd agree and we were

both so busy these last days it was hard to get at you. I installed Mrs. Emmons' sister up there as caretaker. She's a decent old maid, it seems. And Genevieve is with her."

"Genevieve?"

"Genevieve Emmons, yes. The landlady's daughter I told you about. Mr. Pine said you were going to Radcliffe this summer and would have no use for the house."

"Yes, I am."

"And until the summer courses start he said you are going to study with a tutor in Boston."

She nodded.

"I hope I haven't driven you away from New York. You know, I'm going to Johns Hopkins. Besides——"

"You didn't drive me."

"It's uncomfortable for both of us now, but I'm sure we'll get used to it. And I for one don't regret it—now that to-day's hokus pokus is over."

"It was—unspeakable!"

"I know. But it's over," he soothed.

They sat in silence a while, then took refuge in magazines they had brought along.

Phoebe's train was to leave Philadelphia about an hour after they reached it. Harvey wished to see her off and they killed the intervening time by visiting Independence Hall which so interested Phoebe that they stayed too long and had to rush back. They had no time for farewells, not even a handshake, and their minds were too occupied with the immediate present for them to refer to the future.

An odd feeling passed over Harvey at the thought that he could not even write to her. He had a swift, poignant recollection of her face with its childish curves and fair skin, and yet the firm line of her obstinate red mouth. He had kissed that mouth so reverently, so unmeaningly to-day as a public proclamation that he was something he never intended to be—her com-

panion and helper till death. Instead, he was preventing her from ever having such a mate. It was hard on her!

After all, how deep was this history fad of hers? Women are different from men.

For a few weeks the memory of her face continued to haunt him and often at night he was visited with unexpected dissatisfaction—not that they were married, but that they were not to attempt further acquaintanceship. They might have agreed, at least, to correspond. He often wondered how she was getting on.

Harvey's work lay among men whose daily tasks and observations were all-important. Gradually he emulated their absorption. When, after a month or so, he returned to New York, that city had ceased to connote Phoebe or wills or weddings or anything but a certain Professor Treadling who had invited him to inspect his work.

Influenced by Professor Treadling, he decided to build a modest laboratory in the house at Peekskill, a laboratory to be added to and improved upon every year until at his death it might be something worth leaving to science.

He consulted Mr. Pine, who undertook to inform Mrs. Brewster and obtain her formal consent. In due time it came and was forwarded to Harvey who had already gone to Peekskill to look over the property.

Mrs. Emmons' spinster sister, Miss Angie Clapp, shared the family predilection for half-done work. She lived in one wing of the spacious old house and gave the effect of having started mortal corruption there. Genevieve, strictly forbidden by Harvey to do anything at all, only made the beds, washed the dishes, swept the floors, cut the grass—with a lawn mower as dull and vociferous as Miss Clapp herself—laundered the starched pieces, and did a little incidental cooking on hot days when her aunt complained of headache. She was not looking much bet-

ter. Both she and her aunt affirmed that the country never agreed with her.

Harvey tried to start a domestic system, but it proved to be only a troublesome and uncertain cycle of departing servants.

Genevieve, however, was relieved of some of the heavier work under Harvey's watchful eye. In the old days she had liked him best of all her mother's lodgers because he never noticed dust around. Now she began to worship him as one almost as deeply interested in her doings as God.

It was not an ideal household either for a student or a millionaire, but Harvey was only partially aware of his discomfort. He liked the large rooms with their quiet, heavy, old-fashioned furnishings, and accepted Miss Clapp's untidiness as he accepted the antedated plumbing and gas fixtures. He liked the lavish meals, too, though he often wondered why his pet delicacies lacked their former attractiveness. Above all, he enjoyed being able to invite friends to see him, colleagues from the laboratories. And, late in August, Gerald Lloyd paid him a visit.

Miss Clapp did not pretend to share his love of company, but Genevieve got much pleasure from seeing the strange men come and go. She knew and liked, though she somewhat feared Gerald Lloyd. He was funny and fond of "kidding," but one never could be quite sure of his mood.

"I suppose," said Gerald to Harvey, one evening, "you never hear from your so-called wife?"

"Never." Harvey puffed at his pipe.

"I had quite a crush on her for a while," confessed Gerald. "She's awfully pretty. I don't suppose you ever noticed that."

"Yes, I've noticed it. It's too bad."

"Why?" demanded Gerald, and when Harvey did not answer, he laughed reassuringly. "Oh, well, cheer up! My crush is all over."

They continued to smoke together in silence. The warm air was heavy with clematis. In the house an old clock with a mellow voice struck eight, and out among the shrubs the katydids sang.

There was the unexpected tinny rattle of a taxicab, driven up the gravel road yards away.

"Another darned professor!" yawned Gerald, bored.

"None that I know of," Harvey said.

There was the patter of quick footsteps from the hall and Genevieve, breathless with excitement, broke in.

"It's a lady," she announced. "A norful pretty one! She's a blonde!"

CHAPTER XI.

It was Phoebe.

Her summer course at Radcliffe College had ended and she had suddenly decided on a week or two of rest at the old house at Peekskill before she went back for further study. She had been helped to her decision by Mr. Pine who felt himself justified in sending her a few misleading letters. He had lately been troubled with the thought that Charles Cullen might be able to see, from some powerful vantage point beyond the grave, the legal trick that had been played upon him. He felt there was no harm in forcing a better acquaintanceship upon this unusual couple, and he was a hopeful advocate of the combination of propinquity and romantic circumstances. In a letter he had casually informed Phoebe that Harvey was studying at Rockefeller Institute.

Phoebe knew there was a housekeeper at the old place looking after a child Harvey was interested in. But little as she expected to find Harvey at the Cullen homestead, she expected Gerald even else. And Gerald, pretending to be driven frantically curious by Genevieve's announcement of the awful pretty blonde, had seized the little girl by the hand, rushed around to the porte-

cochère, and was the first to welcome the mistress of the house. Being tired by her journey she believed her imagination was playing pranks with her. She thought she had forgotten Gerald Lloyd, because every time his image had obtruded itself on her she had been able to banish it by getting down to hard study.

She and Gerald met in the generously proportioned hall. There was an old-fashioned drop gas lamp above them that shed a subdued amber light. Gerald looked poetically disheveled in his soft-collared shirt, and Phoebe realized she appeared at her best.

"Why—Miss—Mrs.—Phoebe!" exclaimed Gerald. "Does—does Harvey expect you?"

"No," she answered. "Is Harvey here?"

"Yes, I'm here," said Harvey, coming up at this point. "I'm sorry we're so unprepared. Miss Clapp, this is Miss—I mean, Mrs. Brewster—my wife, you know. Will you please get a room in order for her? Have you a suit case—er—Phoebe, or just this satchel?"

"A small trunk. The taxi driver is leaving it on the porch," said Phoebe.

"A trunk?" Harvey peered at her uncertainly through his glasses. He had put on a coat, but the collar was standing up, and he had neglected to smooth his hair. With his bewildered expression he looked like a reprimanded schoolboy. Charity demanded that he be given a reassuring smile.

"Will your wife be using an extra room?" she demanded with acid disapproval. "And me without another pair of hands to lay to the fixing of it—not even Veevie's!"

"Miss Clapp," replied Harvey, "Mrs. Brewster owns one half of this house, and I'm not exactly sure which half. We can at least let her have one room in it."

Miss Clapp scowled experimentally, but decided a look of painful martyr-

dom was more generally depressing and, with a heavy gait, into which she introduced a hitherto undeveloped limp, mounted the stairs.

"Miss Clapp is not an ideal housekeeper," observed Harvey. "But she tries hard, and I want to keep Veevie here. Of course, if they bother——"

"No—no—I expected to find *them* here," Phoebe protested. "It was—it is—— Mr. Pine said you were studying in New York, or I never——"

"I've been here since July. He told me he had written you about my plans for the laboratory."

"I didn't think you were starting work on it till the fall."

"That's odd. I'm pretty well on with it. You can see it in the morning. Come, Jerry, let's get the trunk."

"Never mind," begged Phoebe nervously. "Let it remain on the porch. I expect to leave in the morning."

"Oh, please stay, Phoebe," pleaded Gerald eagerly. "Please don't desert us after offering us a ray of hope."

"Hope?" repeated Phoebe shyly.

"Yes, real hope. Hope of neat rooms and good meals. Harvey thinks he's growing old because he can't study as he used to, but it's nothing but indigestion and chronic upheaval. We're only a pair of helpless men, but with you on our side we could practically denature Miss Clapp. If not, you could fire her on the grounds that you wish to be your own housekeeper."

"What about the little girl?"

"With you here she could stay on, and I bet we'd see a real improvement in her if she were separated from that vulgar she calls her aunt."

"It's true it would help us all, and particularly Veevie, if you could make up your mind to stay a while," admitted Harvey. "I'm afraid Miss Clapp isn't very intelligent in her care of the child."

"Intelligent!" snorted Gerald. "She hasn't a single brain. I've watched her. The only thing she does with any energy

or good will is to fly into a temper. And the only thing she even exerts herself to do is to find an occasion for it. You can't pay people to live in the same house with her."

"There are no servants?" asked Phoebe blankly.

"Here? Why, when they have to pass the house, they run by it," declared Gerald.

"She has muddled things up a bit," said Harvey. "And she's discontented. A vacation might help her if you'd try to stay—say for a week or so."

At this moment Genevieve appeared at the top of the stairs.

"Aunt Angie wants to know if these isn't to come down to the libery?" she called respectfully.

"From here, 'these' look like three unabridged dictionaries," interpreted Gerald nonchalantly.

"My God, drop them!" gasped Harvey, dashing upstairs. "Drop them! What have I told you about lifting weights?"

"You see," said Gerald, "that's Miss Clapp's idea of a rest cure for Genevieve. Do stay for a week—two weeks—my vacation ends in two weeks. We could go back together." He ventured to lay his slim brown hand on her arm, in that manner he had, candid and something bewitchingly impertinent. She reluctantly admitted that he still possessed a charm.

"I'll try it a few days," she conceded, drawing away from his touch and beginning to remove her gloves. "Perhaps I can help Miss Clapp with my room," and she mounted the stairs.

CHAPTER XII.

Miss Clapp left next day for a two weeks' vacation in New York. She consented to call it a vacation, but she was determined to look up a job she had formerly held, a position not without prestige, as head cook in a large settlement center.

"And no more jay towns for me," was her comment unspoken.

"We'll take good care of Genevieve," Phoebe assured her.

"Veevie'll be gettin' restless round about the time her school opens," declared Miss Clapp pessimistically. "She never was none to be idle long. She'll want to be back to New York in a week."

Things began to look up from the moment Miss Clapp washed her inept hands of them. Phoebe found out that a statement in a certain tone to the effect that she had dismissed the housekeeper, brought a gleam of cordiality into domestic agents' eyes, a gleam that preluded a desire on their part to expand first in general and then in particular on the ability of a poor housekeeper to derange otherwise reasonable and responsible servants.

In a day or so the Cullen homestead began to look hopeful. A regular gardener, in place of the occasional hired man, was straightening the lawn and cursing softly over the fine but neglected shrubbery and pathways. A broadly built cook with a passion for orderliness was inviting inspection and comparison with the past in the kitchen. Two housemaids and a useful man cleaned the rooms upstairs, while plumbers, carpenters, and gas fitters attended to incidental defects.

Genevieve flitted about, uncomfortably expecting to be called on to help, though every offer she made to that effect was peremptorily rejected. Phoebe finally found "Treasure Island" in the library, and with this Genevieve was sent out upon the porch and bewitched till dusk.

"Oh goo'ness!" she exclaimed when she came in, "I ain't done anything all day but read. Oh, I'm turrible!"

"Did you like it?" asked Phoebe.

"Yes, ma'am. On'y—it feels so funny—readin' in the daytime. It don't seem right."

All evening she seemed crushed and apologetic, as if she had done something disrespectful. She could not bring herself to be brazen enough to finish the book that night in their presence in the library, but went to bed early. Gerald, going upstairs for a pipe later, saw her round, dark head with its skimpy braids, poked forward into the shaft of light admitted into her room by her half-open door and he recognized the big book she was poring over.

"In the light from the doorway!" Phoebe exclaimed, when he reported this. "She'll ruin her eyes. I'll go up and tell her to light the gas in her room if she wants to read in bed."

"If she's allowed to do that she'll die," laughed Gerald. "I believe she prefers the door crack. We may all kill the poor little thing with our kindness. Miss Clapp is probably right, she'll be crazy to get back to New York, away from our unholy habits."

Phoebe smiled, but as she went upstairs to rescue Genevieve from eyestrain, she wondered if Gerald's flippancies were not unworthy of him.

She spent a good deal of time and thought on Gerald's character. She persuaded herself that this was merely because she considered that he had the makings of a noble and splendid man, but was handicapped by weaknesses which it was some one's duty to remedy. His irreverence, his frivolity, his gay conceitedness, in fact, the whole range of his affectations, could not deeply offend her since she refused to take them seriously. She did not understand that not only were these the foundation of his personality, but his chief fascination, and that it was the spell of these that so influenced her.

She used to talk earnestly with him and found him always ready to listen, his handsome eyes clearly and attentively fixed upon hers, until the intensity of their interest flustered her. He was invariably full of whimsical self-

condemnation that complimented her, and he promised to try to live up to what she believed he could be.

"Only keep on believing in me," he would say in full, deep tones which affected her oddly, since she could feel their beauty and yet doubt their sincerity, and hated herself for finding them theatrical.

"Because I joke, you think I can't feel deeply," he told her once reproachfully, and she jumped eagerly at the explanation, using it to dispel so much in him that did not satisfy her.

He made it plain that it mattered a good deal to him what she thought of him. She could see he found her most unusual. He constantly used such expressions as "you are the first woman I ever met who did thus and so," or "if you had been there you would have acted differently," or "you would have understood." It flattered her and he contrived to make love to her so adroitly that she believed it one mark of his respectful admiration that he never attempted to flirt with her.

With the house in smooth running order, as it was three days after Miss Clapp had become a memory, Phoebe had a good deal of time to devote to any one who wished to claim it. In the morning she taught Genevieve for an hour or two. The child sat through these lessons in awe, contriving to absorb a little knowledge but dreading an exhibition of her own stupidity too much to be an ideal pupil. In the afternoon Genevieve eagerly devoured whatever book Mrs. Brewster gave her. She read with zeal but not always genuine enthusiasm, since Phoebe was deceived by her wish to please and overestimated her capacity. It was while Veevie was thus engaged with standard authors and Harvey busy with his microscope or his prospective laboratory that Gerald and Phoebe had time for their long talks on character and ideals. Gerald meant no harm, but he

was idle, the surroundings were favorable, and she was charming. He liked to think he was indulging in the study of human nature. He was establishing his theory that women invariably crave flattery. In truth, he fed them little else and perceived in them the natural reaction of all sensible beings to the grateful smoothing of their fur, feathers, or feelings.

Things drifted along pleasantly for ten days or so. The success wrought by the change of housekeepers was visible even to the absent-minded Harvey. Servants were available and quiet, the rooms were comfortable, meals were prompt, and food became something demanding special attention and enjoyment. Genevieve, too, looked better. Proper nourishment and rest had already added a few pounds to her lath-like figure and, inspired by Phoebe, she began to take an interest in her dress. She did her best to be genteel, for she had transferred her adoration to Mrs. Brewster, whom she considered the height of gentility.

A letter came at last from Miss Clapp, saying that she had found an "eligent position" in New York City and she intended to take it if Doctor Brewster didn't mind. She was willing, she said, to send back half of her vacation money if he insisted, though she felt she had earned it all. As for Veevie, she might stay on at Brewsters' until they were settled. She wrote:

I hope we can trust you a dooktor not to overtacks the pore child Veevie is a good worker and worth in hard cash twice as much as any of them trollops you got up there. In confidence her ma could use anything you think Veevie earns and what with girls so scarce it would be good all round.

Harvey read this aloud at the breakfast table.

"In other words," said he, "Veevie is now on our staff of servants, provided you don't overwork her, Phoebe."

"You'd better quit making her study



He was watching Phoebe and Gerald depart on their walk, and he was vaguely aware of being troubled and, at any rate, of not being able to concentrate on the work in hand.

and read," warned Gerald. "She never had to when her aunt was here."

"Well," said Phoebe thoughtfully, "it's just as well for us to send Mrs. Emmons some wages to establish the child's status here. When I go next week she might be in an anomalous position, you see."

"Coming back with me, Phoebe?" asked Gerald quickly.

"No, I'm going to Boston."

"Veevie will miss you," said Harvey.

Something in his voice drew her attention to him. He was looking at his plate, but her glance attracted his. His eyes rested on her intently.

"It's been very nice here," she ventured at last, awkwardly.

"The nicest vacation I've ever had in my life!" exclaimed Gerald.

"I'm sorry you're going," said Harvey haltingly. "Of course, I realize such a feeling is pure selfishness. You have your own important work. I can only thank you for the time and comfort you have given me."

"That's the trouble with intelligent women nowadays," grumbled Gerald. "Oh, to have lived when man-pleasing was woman's sphere!"

Phoebe laughed.

"I must break the news of her service to Genevieve," she said lightly, "and then to our lessons."

At eleven o'clock Gerald interrupted them, pleading that it was the time Veevie was usually set free, and he wanted a lesson himself.

"You," he said to Genevieve impressively, "you are now a domestic. You are to be paid for work—hard work, but we'll be easy on you your first day. Go out and clean the fountain. Come, Mrs. Brewster, you've got a lot to teach me this morning." And he took Phoebe's arm and masterfully led her out of the library.

"Come for a walk, I need it—I need your help," he urged disconsolately. "I've been waiting all morning for eleven o'clock to come."

"I must get my hat," answered Phoebe with one look at his troubled face.

As she put on her hat, fluffing her pretty hair out from under its brim with a care she would not have been capable of a few months before, she reflected that Gerald was only a boy in spite of his years, an appealing boy, whose good qualities needed pruning.

"I must be a sort of sister to him," she concluded. "Sybil doesn't understand him at all."

Soon after they had set out, she confided her intention to him, begging him to be frank with her so that she might be of real use to him.

"I always longed to have a brother,"

she declared. "I've envied girls who did. Now I have one."

"No!" cried Gerald vehemently. "You haven't. I have one sister and that's enough. Besides, I don't want to be your brother—that's the last thing I want to be!"

"But—but—Jerry—why?" Her ideas of the essential propriety of life forbade her understanding him.

"If you were really old Harvey's wife—if you had ever cared a cent for him, I could have kept still. I'm not a cad. But this whole affair is so damned unnatural! Why did you fly off and get married that first day? If you had been merely engaged it would——"

She did not like the turn of the conversation. She could no longer dodge his meaning and she began to be afraid of the tones of his voice.

"Divorce wouldn't be fair to Bugs, now he's started his fool laboratory. It would mean giving up all that money."

"Divorce!" gasped the horrified Phoebe, wondering how they had got to this point.

"No, it would be too hard on you. And Syb's right. I've no initiative. I'm a failure—and poor. Oh, I didn't expect to get so fond of you. I meant only to flirt a little!"

"Flirt!"

"Oh, just at first." Gerald was conscious of a misstep and rectified it instantly. "You are so pretty! How did I know what you really were? I'd never met any one like you."

She bowed her head to hide her blush.

"I thought I'd never see you again. You and Bugs were to separate. That was a confounded arrangement. It's all that Clapp woman's fault. Why didn't you leave that first night?"

They had come to an open country road and now stood on a little bridge. They leaned upon the rail together and his elbow touched hers. She thought herself heartless for enjoying his misery

and the power she possessed yet could not use. She wondered if the affection she felt for him were love, that desire to let her elbow remain in contact with his, pretending she did not notice.

"Dear, I'm so unhappy," he whispered in her ear, and she let him take her in his arms, his lips on hers.

The sound of a dilapidated Ford interrupted them and brought her to her senses with a shock. She had let him kiss her, rapturously and passionately. She had returned the kiss at least willingly. She wanted to hide her face but—oh, the burning irony of it!—she wanted to hide her face on Gerald's breast!

They stood leaning over the rail again. Then she heard herself speak, painfully, tragically.

"You must go away at once. We must never see each other again!"

"To-day! Why, I can't go home to-day!" protested Gerald, and then, feeling such practicality was out of tune, he added: "Harvey might think—all sorts of wrong things if I went off before I planned."

"When your vacation is over, then. And—and you must promise?"

"Only one more. The last—please!"

Again she let him kiss her, but it proved an anticlimax, for their minds were alert for the possible passing of another Ford.

CHAPTER XIII.

Harvey stood looking over his microscope through the windows of the conservatory that he used as a workroom. He was watching Phoebe and Gerald depart on their walk and he was vaguely aware of being troubled and, at any rate, of not being able to concentrate on the work in hand. There was something about the way those two walked together, especially in the dejected and confidential slope of Jerry's shoulders that roused in Harvey an incomprehensible sadness.

"I suppose I'm sorry that he's going back," he meditated at last. "I shall be lonesome." This thought pricked his understanding. "I *am* lonesome," he suddenly glowered. "Why didn't they ask me along? Why don't they ever ask me along?"

They were out of sight now. He wondered where they were going. They went out walking frequently and always seemed to enjoy it. They talked such a lot as they came homeward up the path that Harvey often wondered what it was all about. They never talked so much together indoors when he was around.

Was he a check on them?

Was Jerry— He pulled himself up with a start. Jerry—

Gerald, in his irresponsible, debonair way, was always having amatory adventures. He used to amuse himself telling his cousin diverting stories of how easily or with how much difficulty he could wheedle a kiss from a girl. He called them harmless little affairs, admitting that one or two might have grown serious—even tragic. It used to bore Harvey to have to make even a pretense of listening, but now he remembered several of these tales very vividly and with them the tones of Gerald's voice the other night when he had said of Phoebe, "I had quite a crush on her, myself."

Was Jerry in love with Phoebe? But that involved another question—one far more vital. Was Phoebe in love with Gerald?

Harvey had no faith in the gravity of Jerry's passion, but Phoebe was not of his type. She was not the girl to be wheedled into kissing.

His train of thought broke off suddenly and he was confronted by the irrelevant vision of Phoebe's face, pale, set off by a cloud of white brides' veiling, the eyes closed as she raised her lips to him before the church full of witnesses. It was the only time he had

ever kissed her and they had gone through it with the precision of a surgeon handling specially delicate tissues in a difficult operation. He jerked himself back rudely to the present.

No, Phoebe mustn't fall in love with Jerry. The possibility of it disquieted him so that he paused to wonder at the depths of his concern. Well, it was, because it would mean that the whole thing had been a bad mistake. It would mean the sweeping away of all his plans, the return to that nightmare of poverty and uncongenial work, the old gloomy, desolate life at Mrs. Emmons', and the loss of something else not so easily designated, but having to do with Phoebe's dainty presence itself—the blue of her eyes, the soft, light gold of her hair.

The laboratory had grown insufferably hot and the smears on the microscope slides looked most unpromising.

"I've been overdoing things," concluded Harvey. "I need exercise." And with a gesture of farewell, half conciliatory, half repudiating, as if the bacilli he was abandoning were capable of reproach, he strode hastily out.

"I'll go and meet them," he decided.

He saw them coming toward him down the long, hilly road while he was still some distance off. They were walking slowly, widely separated, as if they had quarreled, and they were not speaking. He was extraordinarily cheered by this and the fact that they greeted him with enthusiasm.

Yes, Phoebe was lovely to look at, and it was comforting to observe that she was level-headed in proportion.

Just before dinner that night Phoebe entered the library where Harvey was reading. He was struck by her discomposure.

"Harvey," she began, "Jerry did such a stupid thing this morning!"

"Yes?" He eyed her steadily.

"It's about Veevie," she explained.

"Oh—Veevie? What about her?"

"He was joking. He declared that now she was to be a paid servant, she had to work, and he playfully told her to clean the fountain. He thought she'd see it as an absurdity."

"Well?"

"But she didn't. You know the old lily-pond filled with stagnant water? She thought he meant that. Heaven knows how she tried to go about it. The gardener found her there soaked and exhausted, and sent her up to the house. She has had two violent chills this afternoon."

"Veevie—chills!" Harvey rose hastily. "Where is she?"

"I'll show you her room."

Harvey followed Phoebe, wondering at his own perturbation. True, chills and what they might portend were ominous in Veevie's case, but he had handled dangerous and fatal cases before without a qualm.

Those were cases, however—this was Veevie, to whom he was making up for former neglect, who was just beginning to repay him for his trouble, whose hollow, affectionate eyes followed him so trustingly, whose ungainly anxiety to please had so deep an appeal. With a little shock he realized that she had entwined herself in his heart through those irresistible qualities of loyalty and dependence that make puppies so dear.

She lay, her dark, small, flushed face, and bright, dilated eyes in startling contrast to the white bed coverings. She looked more like a little monkey, pinning in captivity, than a child, and she was quivering with fear.

"Gee, honest, doctor, I thought he meant it! I didn't do it a purpose to get sick," she panted heavily.

Pity such as he had never felt before seemed to crush Harvey, for his quick, trained eye saw instantly what she was in for, she who had never had any real life, who had been so grateful for mere existence. His weakness

passed into sudden determination to fight for her, to bring her safely through.

"No one thinks you did it a purpose, child," he reassured her, and reached over to take her pulse. She misunderstood the gesture and clutched his hand convulsively. He looked a moment at those dingy twiglike fingers with the nails broken and work-stained.

"Abbie said you'd be mad at me," said Genevieve with difficulty. "Honest, I didn't know he was joking."

"It's hard to tell sometimes," soothed Harvey. "I know you were trying to please. Don't be afraid of me, Veevie. Relax and let me hold your wrist."

Her skin was burning and her pulse leaping madly.

"Veevie is just getting up a little shindy to keep me in practice—general practice," he declared at last, lightly, to Phoebe, who had been standing at the foot of the bed. Her regard was fixed not on Genevieve but on himself, with a peculiar soberness. Something in her expression puzzled him. To dispel it he added blunderingly:

"I think to help me out, in case I've forgotten anything about medicine, we'll have a trained nurse for you, Veevie."

"For me?" gasped Genevieve.

"Wouldn't I do?" asked Phoebe.

"I'm afraid not. But if you really wish, you might help. Come, Veevie, child, let's have a look at your chest."

His stethoscope confirmed his fears. At last he allowed the exhausted little girl to lie back, breathing heavily, on her pillow, and coughing intermittently.

"Yes, we'll have a nurse to help out Mrs. Brewster," he said, gently patting Genevieve's trembling hand. "Nurses are lovely people. Ask her."

"Miss Bonner, my best friend, is a nurse," smiled Phoebe.

"I'd like her," murmured Genevieve.

"Could we get her?" asked Phoebe.

"I could phone and try," answered

Harvey. "It's rather foolish, when undoubtedly here in Peekskill——"

"I want your best friend," insisted Genevieve.

"She could be here to-morrow. I'm sure I could take charge to-night," said Phoebe. "Abbie sleeps in the next room. I could call her if I needed help, couldn't I, Abbie?"

"Yes, Mrs. Brewster," answered Abbie, coldly respectful. At that moment the dinner bell rang.

"Well," said Harvey doubtfully, "come down and let's talk it over. Abbie will stay up here."

Abbie moved to the window, saying nothing, her mouth shut tight and her back aggressive. Harvey opened the door for Phoebe and followed her out. When they were out of earshot on the floor below, she turned to him.

"What is it?" she asked.

"I can't say yet."

"It's bad?"

"I'm afraid so."

"Would it be foolish to send for Miss Bonner?"

"Not if you prefer to have her here."

"I would prefer it."

"Then go ahead down. I'll phone from up here. I have her number here somewhere."

The telephone in the upper hall was near the landing. Harvey watched Phoebe descend the stair and saw Gerald come out of the library to meet her.

"I was wondering if that dinner bell weren't a false alarm!" Gerald said. "I hear Veevie's sick."

"Yes," answered Phoebe.

"Poor little nut! But she deserves it. I hope it teaches her to recognize a joke when she sees one hereafter," was Gerald's petulant complaint, as they moved toward the dining room.

Harvey was fortunate enough to find Miss Bonner in. She said she would be up in the morning. He reported this across the table to Phoebe a few minutes later. He had found her and Gerald

sitting silent over their empty soup plates. He was aware of a subtle glow of welcome from Phoebe as he entered the room and she listened to what he had to tell her with friendly approval.

"I'm glad we can get her," she said gratefully. "She's a good nurse, as I know well, and she thinks the world of your skill."

"That's a doctor's first requirement in a nurse, isn't it?" demanded Gerald sarcastically. "I suppose that's why Harvey sent for her. They're hard to find, people who think that."

Harvey saw Phoebe's brow knit slightly. An amazing thrill of gratification shot through him because Gerald and Phoebe were so evidently out of harmony. For the first time he permitted himself to realize that he had been jealous of Jerry.

"But you're not going to allow Phoebe to do any nursing?" Gerald protested suddenly. "It's dangerous!"

"I can't prevent it," said Harvey.

"It rests entirely with me to decide to be decent," added Phoebe, "and I'm fond of Veevie."

"But I've only three days' more holiday," pleaded Gerald desperately.

Phoebe flushed.

"What has that to do with it?"

"Oh, I wish I were deathly sick."

"Oh, Jerry," cut in Harvey angrily.

"Quit thinking about yourself!"

The meal proceeded in silence.

Phoebe had lots of time to think that night between the times that she was administering to Genevieve. Harvey came in for a share in her meditations, chiefly because he was in the sick room so frequently to urge that she let him relieve her.

Had she been in love with Gerald when she had permitted him to kiss her? She tried to recall the feeling of tragic inevitability that had stirred her at the time, but it was impossible. The act now seemed monstrous and her motives ridiculous.

Does love come and go so swiftly and so easily? She wondered if her present indifference were entirely due to having seen him that night unmoved, still flippant, selfish, and inconsequential in the face of Genevieve's danger, for which, indeed, he was responsible, however unintentionally. Was it because she had at last awakened to the realization that what she had considered his weakness was really his essence? Was there no greater anguish to disillusionment than this feeling of anger and self-debasement?

Her finer nature and her instincts told her different. No, she had never been in love with Gerald Lloyd.

She recognized her feeling for him now as something on a par with the schoolgirl's infatuation for a *matinée* idol. She had been captured by his physical charm, his supple grace, the sweep of his blond hair from his forehead, the mesmerism of his fine, wide eyes, and because of this surface beauty she had endowed him with qualities she had wished he possessed, blinding herself to his real ones.

She wondered whether her madness had been noticeable. Surely Harvey, had he been aware of it, must lose his respect for her completely. She determined that as soon as Miss Bonner came and Genevieve was a little better she would leave Peekskill and go back to her studies. There, at least, she had no chance to play the fool.

CHAPTER XIV.

Miss Bonner came the next morning, but, as Harvey had feared, Genevieve developed pneumonia and was desperately ill. The crisis came the day Gerald left for home. It was an abstracted and worried Phoebe who shook hands with him and said good-by.

"You'll be coming to New York some time, won't you, Phoebe?" he asked.

"Yes, surely."

"And you'll let me know when you

do? As your husband's cousin, I have some claim on you."

"Have you?"

"Don't be blind, Phoebe. Have you no heart at all?"

"It's all in Veevie's room just now," answered Phoebe, releasing her hand, which he held so firmly.

"With Harvey! Yes, that's like a woman!"

"Jerry, how unworthy!"

"Oh, perhaps you think it's for Veevie," grugged Gerald. "Women always fool themselves like that. But it's Harvey, all right—old Bugs, who hasn't a drop of red blood in him!"

"Let us, at least, part friends, Jerry," said Phoebe with some exasperation: "Good-by."

"Please!" He held out his hands, but with another quick "good-by" over her shoulder she was gone.

"Men believe women occupy their minds entirely with coquetry," she mused contemptuously, as she went upstairs. "It's because they cannot think of women without sentimentality."

Yes, that characterized Gerald, but was it fair to Harvey? It was a rather dramatic answer that came to her when she opened the door of the sick room and saw the latter, his face drawn with anxiety and fatigue, working with Miss Bonner and aware of her only as a fine, sentient weapon with which he was fighting death.

Veevie's frail life burned low. The crisis passed into what seemed an inevitable collapse, but Harvey threw his own strength and resolution into the balance, and the indefatigable Miss Bonner was there to help. Phoebe could do little but relieve them, calling upon the nurse or the doctor whenever to her inexperienced eyes the end seemed near. In these watches she had time to think a good deal about Harvey, his skill and energy and self-forgetfulness, that self-forgetfulness that seemed so much the greater in contrast

with Gerald's egotism. She recalled Gerald's biting characterization of his cousin: "Old Bugs, who hasn't a drop of red blood in him."

Red blood? It is true that Harvey could never have lost his head over the meretricious as she had done! And even in these terrible hours he seemed calm and well-poised and proof against despair. But not cold! She thought of the tenderness with which he handled the little patient. He was grave and quiet, perhaps, but as full of profound sensibility as of unflagging hope and courage.

"No," she thought, her admiration of Harvey making more scathing her contempt for Gerald, "because Harvey is a man above self, above passion, above personal happiness or woe, the man whose own spiritual fire warms and lights him through his noble life, Gerald has found him bloodless and inhuman. And," she concluded in deep humility, "I have only begun to learn to understand him. But I can thank God I am no longer blind. To appreciate him is as near as I can ever come to being like him."

Genevieve began to mend. Even the sour-visaged Abbie, who had begrudged the child the attention of the masters of the household, showed gladness and relief that she was getting well.

Miss Bonner, who had had her mind fully occupied by the little invalid until now, began to look around, and seized the chance to renew the past.

"Veevie was lucky," she told Phoebe late one afternoon, as they sat together in the room where the patient lay sleeping quietly. "Nothing but the doctor being right on the spot ever saved her. I admit that dose of digitalis scares me yet. Lord, how I hate pneumonia! Who is Veevie?"

"Doctor Brewster's landlady's child."

"More charity. Well, God knew what he was doing when he gave Dr. Brewster money instead of expecting

him to earn it. You got a wonderful man for a husband, Phoebe."

"He is—remarkable," Phoebe admitted lamely.

"Are you happy?"

"Oh, yes, we both have what we want. To-morrow, if Veevie keeps on improving, the doctor must show you his laboratory."

"Are you going to live up here in Peekskill for good?"

"I? Oh, no, I'm going back to Boston. I only remained while Veevie needed me."

"I thought— Aren't you living together?"

"You know perfectly well we never expected to."

"Phoebe, you're not in love with some one else? That handsome cousin?"

"Gertie, how foolish!" Phoebe suddenly rose and thrust out her hands in a gesture of repulsion. "Can't we think of anything but—love! I hate the word."

"You're different." Miss Bonner sighed and shook her head. "I don't know what you're made of. You're interested in such funny things. History and politics, like some old professor. There was one time I thought—but you wouldn't tell me a lie?"

"No, Gertie."

"And it isn't Mr. Lloyd?"

"No."

"Well, I wish it would be Dr. Brewster—and soon. He deserves to be happy. It's easy to see he's only waiting for a sign."

The foolish, sentimental, overworked phrase went through Phoebe's heart like a stab, poignant, vital, and new. She turned away to the window to hide the fire that, unbidden, had flamed up in her eyes.

"Yes," she said gently, "he deserves to be happy."

She scarcely heard any more of what Miss Bonner said, answering at random in monosyllables she hoped would

apply. Was it true? And how could Miss Bonner know? Gertie was a dear, but she was always seeing tender relations everywhere.

When Harvey came into the room a little later Phoebe watched him furtively, half dreading to see him altered—Harvey, so cool and aloof. A cot had been set up near the window, and he stopped inquiringly when he saw this.

"Abbie had it put there for me," Miss Bonner explained. "I'm going to do twenty-four hours duty now. There's nothing to do at night."

Harvey looked swiftly at Phoebe.

"Are you going away?" he asked.

"Not for a few days yet," replied Phoebe, wondering if she imagined the impetuosity in his voice. There was a pause which Harvey broke by going over to the bed.

"She's been asleep an hour," reported Miss Bonner. "She'll wake any minute now."

"Then I'll wait here. You'd better rest if you're going to stay on at night. Phoebe will be here if I need any help," said Harvey, evidently occupied with Veevie's pulse.

Miss Bonner rose so promptly that Phoebe hoped Harvey did not notice it.

"I have to write a letter," declared the nurse. "I've been here nearly a week, and this is my first chance, and if I write now John can take it to the post to-night." With this exuberant explanation she left them alone.

Harvey went over to where Phoebe sat, and stood before her.

"You're going away in a few days, Phoebe?"

"Yes."

"But your term doesn't begin until October."

"I have lots to do. I want to get an apartment this year."

"I see."

"You will stay here, of course?"

"Most of the time. Would you come here sometimes at holidays?"

"If you wish me to."

"I could have Gerald here, too."

"That would be pleasant, but not necessary."

"Phoebe," he began haltingly.

"Yes, Harvey?" But he did not instantly continue, and gradually she gathered courage to look fully at him, to take him in, as it were, from foot to head—the careless, well-built, loosely knit figure, the thin, sensitive hands, the slightly stooping shoulders, the head thrust forward toward her with its thick, rumpled hair, its tired, eager lines, and the intent gray eyes behind the glasses. This was the man Fate had thrust on her for her husband, choosing for her as she would never have had the wisdom to choose for herself. But how far was he really hers? Her thoughts harked back to Miss Bonner's silly phrase—she "had only to give him the sign." So she repeated, her voice soft with encouragement:

"Yes, Harvey?"

"We are friends, aren't we?"

"Surely."

"It alters things a bit, doesn't it?"

"How do you mean?"

"We owe each other something now. A sort of trust—something that did not exist while we were strangers. It makes our — our — marriage — less — meaningless—more—sinister."

It was an unexpected conclusion. She was struck dumb.

"I mean," he spoke with difficulty, "it is up to us to make new marriage vows to each other. I promised never to—to take advantage of the contract. Now, being friends, shan't we promise not to let the money stand in the way—in case either one of us wants to be released?"

"If you wish it, Harvey."

"But we must be honest, Phoebe. Has your work been a disappointment to you? Is there something else that you prefer? Something that money has nothing to do with?"

"I have not worked long enough to sense disappointment," she replied.

"That isn't always necessary for an awakening."

"Oh." She looked up under her eyelashes. "You mean—you think I am—in love?"

"I think—you could be—if you let yourself."

"Yes—I could be—if I let myself."

There was a long silence.

"That," he began again, clearing his throat, "is what I was so clumsily driving at. As soon as possible we will arrange—for a divorce."

"Do you want one?"

"For your happiness only."

"The reverse of my happiness—would come—through a divorce."

He knelt swiftly before her, seizing her shoulders, peering into her face.

"It—it isn't Jerry?" he demanded.

"It isn't Jerry," she replied softly.

They became conscious then of Genevieve's eyes, wide and appreciative, and the enjoyment of a third person submerged their own in confusion. Kneeling is a ridiculous posture, seen from any point save that, still more ridiculous, of the knelt-to. But their hands touched and clung and they leaned over the bed, full of solicitous questions, to prove their interest in the patient.

At this moment Miss Bonner came into the room, carrying in her hand a legal-looking blue envelope, her eyes bright with curiosity and excitement.

"Look what I found—way in the back of a drawer of the desk in my room! I was hunting for a blotter. It's marked 'Will and Testament of Charles Cullen.' Do you suppose it's anything—important?"

"A will?" asked Phoebe blankly.

"Another will?" inquired Harvey. "Oh, it's probably just a copy that Charles Cullen kept here for reference. He died in this house."

"It's sealed," said Miss Bonner, handing it to him.

"So it is. Shall we open it, Phoebe?"

"Perhaps we'd better wait and ask Mr. Pine. Law is so queer."

"It could do no harm. Miss Bonner will stay with Veevie and we'll go down to the library and see what's in it. Come."

They were not thinking of the will as they descended, hand in hand, to the library and shut the door upon interruptions. The blue envelope lay neglected on the table for some minutes and Phoebe, feeling the strength of Harvey's arms, holding her so close, thought of his gentleness, his sincerity, his quiet modesty, his profound kindness, and his fundamental integrity. She melted with pride and joy in the

knowledge that she was sweet to him.

"What have I ever done,"

marveled Harvey at last, "that I should be made so happy?"

"I, either! Oh, Harvey, how I used to misread you! How I hated you as a doctor!"

"Dearest—I don't blame you."

"I'm not joking, Harvey, I never would have had you again, and so, if it hadn't been for uncle Charles——"

"Dear, dear uncle Charles! God bless him!"

The act of benediction warranted another eclipse.

"My wife!" whispered Harvey.

"My husband!"

"Do you remember our wedding kiss?"

"Oh, Harvey, have you, too, thought of that?"

"Often, lately. It was cheeky—wasn't it?"

"It's cheekier—in a woman."

"I love you, Phoebe!"

"Harvey—let's have another wedding."

"Not really, darling—three!"

"Here—now. Just you and me—and uncle Charles. Put on my ring and say that again—what you said just now. And I will say it to you and we'll kiss—and then, all over again we'll read that dear will."

They went through the form gravely and solemnly under the time-dimmed portraits of their forbears.

The gardener found her there, soaked and exhausted, and sent her up to the house.



"Uncle Charles," said Harvey at last, reverently raising the will with a comprehensive glance at all the pictures on the wall, "I don't know which you are but I want to tell you that because of your kindness to us we shall change our name to Cullen. Shan't we, Phoebe?"

"Yes—oh, yes! Now, uncle Charles, respond!"

Harvey broke the seal of the envelope, they unfolded the will, and, arms about each other, they began to read.

CHAPTER XV.

But it was another will.

The portrait of Charles Cullen, which they were unable to identify, showed a stoutish man in the early fifties, with astonished eyes and pursed red lips. His expression was not inappropriate to the present occasion.

"Are you sure," asked Phoebe, dry-lipped, "that this will is of a later date than the other?"

"Yes," answered Harvey. "The other was drawn in May, nineteen-seven, the year I graduated from P. and S. I noticed the date on that account."

"What does it all mean, Harvey?"

"It seems to mean that having got us safely married, uncle Charles has withdrawn his blessing to bestow it upon certain institutions in which we have no interest." He looked again at the will. "Not even a hospital in the list!" he exclaimed.

"And no mention of us?"

"Yes, dear. The interest of ten thousand dollars a year, each. He does not seem to trust us with the capital."

"I mean of our marriage?"

"No."

"Then are we married?"

"Three times, dearest."

"I mean—is it legal?"

"It's the only part of the other will that seems to be binding. Are you sorry?"

"Oh, Harvey, I'm so dazed! Can a man so completely alter his mind?"

"It took over five years, dear. This is dated August, nineteen-twelve."

"He died last January and Mr. Pine said he was ill four years before he died. Couldn't we contest this on the grounds that he was ill when he made it?"

"Illness isn't always mental, dear. Besides, which of the two wills sounds saner to an unprejudiced mind?"

"Then it means—all this was a dream. We are poor. This house is, not ours, your laboratory will never be finished, and my studies are over. Oh, Harvey, what will become of Veevie?"

"There is one thing we can do," said Harvey slowly. "As I think of it, I believe it is our plain duty to do it."

"What?" she asked, arrested.

"Destroy this will."

"Harvey—you're jesting!"

"I am in deadly earnest, dear."

"But we can't. It would be wrong—criminal!"

"Criminal, perhaps, but not wrong. Dear, look at the bequests. Three hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the building of a chapel to be known as the Charles Cullen Chapel to a church already too large for its congregation. Three hundred thousand for a Cullen Alcove in the public library. Fifty thousand for various Cullen scholarships. Five hundred thousand are to be spent altering this house and buying pictures to establish the Charles Cullen Art Museum. Fifty thousand goes on a memorial fountain. Two hundred thousand supports some pet charity societies; and the rest is for expenses and small legacies like yours and mine."

"Who are we to judge his bequests?" asked Phoebe uneasily.

"Do you honestly believe we could not do better with his money?"

"Harvey—if only for the sake of the other small legatees, we must not destroy this will."

"We could find them ourselves and give them their share. Tell them we found a letter from Charles Cullen to that effect."

"We couldn't do it, Harvey—we couldn't!"

"Why not?"

"He is dead. These are his last wishes."

"They are vain, silly, egotistic wishes to have his name survive, attached to extravagant and useless things!"

"The scholarships?"

"Only fifty thousand dollars for them. We could afford to endow those in his memory, ourselves."

"Harvey, we can't! We're not capable of an unprejudiced view. We have too much at stake. Don't you see? We daren't. We must give up everything. This will must stand!"

"That is sentimental."

"It is honorable."

"There are times when honor must be subordinated to something more beneficial to mankind."

"Harvey—Harvey, don't talk like that!"

"You are frightened by words, dear—words that are weighty but not valuable, leaden shackles of the past. Honor has so often come to mean respect for dead traditions—no—worship—blind worship of the dead simply because they are dead. That is what you are mistaking for honor."

"Don't be too hard on traditions."

"Dear, only think. Do not let yourself be hypnotized by a purely conventional association of ideas," begged Harvey. "It was you yourself who instantly grasped the importance of this money, and all you said was a legitimate protest against our giving it up. I am pleading for my work and yours. If in all my life I am able to make one small discovery or even to prove certain paths of research are vain, isn't that worth more than all the chapels, library alcoves, and art collections of the whole

will? Think of the lives to be saved or rendered more worth living through better health. Think of the useful work done and the increased happiness! And if, through your study, you can even in the smallest way help people to learn from what they have done what they will do, or at least to gain patience and sympathy with understanding, how can there be any question of which is more important? We are fighting the greatest evils of mankind—disease and war—not with plasters of emotionalism, patent panaceas of charity or culture, which have already wrecked half the world, but with knowledge, with the sober, humble striving for knowledge. We are here to collect a spark at a time while we live; to hope to light a candle in the night; to sacrifice everything to that hope; to keep our faith with the future!" He raised his head, his face white and illumined with his vision and his desire, fanatic and impersonal.

"Harvey, you make me afraid," said Phoebe in a low voice.

He caught her hands and clasped them to his breast.

"My dear, don't be afraid to think."

"Are you sure—we know—when we are thinking?"

He dropped her hands.

"That is true. We are excited. I have spoken in a way that warrants your question. We must take time. Let us not decide now. Here, my dearest, take it and lock it away for to-night." He placed the will in her hands but did not instantly relinquish it. "I know," he said quietly, "and you know—nothing but our cowardice keeps this wicked joke alive."

"Cowardice?" she repeated. "Yes, I am afraid to destroy it. I'm afraid of my own guilt and future regret."

"And not of your guilt and regret if we let it be probated?"

She looked up at him with eyes that seemed drugged.

"You said we must take time," she implored desperately. "Give me till tomorrow. No——" He had moved toward her and she thrust out her hands to repulse him. "No, please, Harvey. Not now. You told me I must think. I must forget you and think."

But his figure in the lamplight occupied her mind's eye all the way up to her room.

She lit the gas and stood rereading the stilted words that would demolish all their noble ambitions. This will had been made over four years before Charles Cullen had died and he had made no attempt to give it to Mr. Pine. It had been drawn up by a lawyer in Peekskill evidently unknown to Mr. Pine. It had been left carelessly in the back of a drawer of a neglected desk. Perhaps Charles Cullen himself had had doubts about allowing it to stand. Perhaps he had made it in a passing mood of uncertainty and had died forgetting it altogether. Why else had its existence been so completely overlooked?

She became positive that Charles Cullen intended the first will to be effective. It was in accordance, then, with his real wishes, as she was sure she saw them, that Phoebe carefully folded the will and raised it to the gas flame.

A door slammed somewhere downstairs and the sound sent a shock through her uplifted arm, as if some invisible force had nudged her violently. She dropped the will and stood staring down at it, her heart thumping. Then she raised her eyes and caught sight of her reflection in the mirror of the mantel. Her drawn, pallid, guilty features shocked and repelled her. That expression of ugly terror convinced her of the enormity of the act she had been about to commit. She felt she had been shaken into moral wakefulness and it did not seem possible to her that Harvey, too, had not been roused from his high-minded law-

lessness. If not, there was no time to waste. She must see him at once and convert him to what she knew was right.

She found him still in the library, gazing out into the blue dusk beyond the dignified perpendiculars of the long, plush curtains. She called him by name and he started toward her.

"No, Harvey," she said, steeling herself against his power. "We must settle this matter, now."

"My darling, if you wish."

"When I went upstairs I thought you had convinced me. I tried to destroy the will, but I found out—I can never be convinced."

"Dear, it is for me to do it, not you!"

"Could you, Harvey? Without a doubt? Without a single fear?"

"Without a single doubt or fear, Phoebe."

"No!" she denied emphatically.

"That's not true! I cannot and will not believe it of you!"

"You must believe it," he replied.

She stared at him searchingly, then held out the blue envelope.

"Here is the will," she said steadily.

"Remember, I would not touch a cent of the money its loss would bring to me. Not only that, but if you really were able, without compunction, to sacrifice all honor to your ambition, it would be the end of all between us."

"You don't mean that, Phoebe."

"I do."

"One cannot stop loving like that."

"It is only such things that kill love. To believe, to trust, and to be deceived. Harvey,"—her voice broke—"tell me you have only been testing me. Show me you are the Harvey I love, noble and honest and brave. It won't be so hard to be poor, dear. It won't be like before. We shall have each other and we shall love each other the better for this struggle we have shared, this conquest we have made."

"I could not love you better!"

"Then prove it by understanding me

and having faith in me. Dear—my dear, I am urging what is right!"

Suddenly and fiercely he pressed the packet into her hands.

"Take it!" he cried. "Do what you like with it! Phoebe, my darling, you love me and we shall have each other—always—always!"

He took her in his arms and she surrendered to him happily.

"Harvey, I knew! I'm so glad! If you could only guess how glad!"

"My darling!" He smiled down into her eyes.

"It has—oh, I don't want to be blasphemous—but it has reestablished God—and—good."

He stroked back her soft hair with a hand that trembled.

"My orthodox little Phoebe! Yes, and there is a hell, dear. It is the thought of losing you."

"I know," answered Phoebe, "for I thought I was losing you. We seemed so far away when you pretended to believe—when you spoke so wildly. It was wicked of you to have frightened me! Aren't you ashamed?"

"I am ashamed of anything that would drive you from me."

Slowly a doubt began to form in her mind under the bright, fevered look in his eyes. She drew back from him.

"Harvey," she begged uncertainly, "tell me—it is because you believe—you know I am right—that you are giving in to me."

"What does it matter what I believe or know?" he asked, and his arms tightened about her. But she pushed away from him in fear.

"Is it—is it—just—for me?"

"I have given you your wish. Isn't that enough?"

"For me?" Her expression of horror was so vivid that he gently freed her. "*You*—Harvey! No, I have heard wrong!"

"Phoebe, what do you want me to do?"

"*Do!* You can't *do* anything. It's what you are!" She stared at him despairingly. "And you are not the man I loved. You are a stranger. You are—oh—" She burst out suddenly in utter loathing. "For me—for a woman—for a bribe! Now I know that you meant it when you decried honor. Now I can see what it means! And I believed— Oh, I would rather you had destroyed the will than this!"

"Phoebe!"

"Keep away! I despise you! I despise myself for having loved a man beneath contempt." She burst into tears, shamefaced and angry. He watched her silently, his body slack and hopeless.

"I suppose it was unforgivable weakness," he said at last, lifelessly. "Perhaps you are right to think so harshly of me—to refuse to listen to me after this. Well, there's no more to be said. Do as you like about the will."

With an effort she mastered herself. "You wish me to send it to Mr. Pine?" she asked, drying her eyes.

"Yes, if you honestly believe it would be right."

"Oh, do you not *see* that it is right?"

"No." He shook his head with a bitter smile. "I am an inconsistent sinner. I balk at the lie direct."

She moved slowly toward the door. "Do not think," she began, making an endeavor to control her shaking voice, "do not think—I—too—am not suffering."

"Phoebe!" he cried, advancing.

"No!" she flamed, her drooping body suddenly rigid and quivering. "At least respect my grief! The man I loved is dead!"

CHAPTER XVI.

Phoebe got back her appointment in the old school in time to begin the fall term. She was known as Mrs. Brewster now, but none of the discreetly courteous teachers ever passed any re-

mark about it or seemed to be aware that she was not living with her husband. She suspected they knew something was amiss, but she gratefully accepted their ladylike manner of skimming so smoothly over the surface of life and, for her part, did nothing that might disturb it. So nothing seemed changed.

She was, indeed, immovably determined that nothing should be changed; that the past six months should be completely erased from her life. She had loved Harvey. When she had faced the truth that, just as in Gerald's case, she had endowed Harvey with qualities of which he was incapable, she saw in the difference between disappointment and anguish, the distinction between fascination and love. The thought of Harvey had become so painful to her that for some time she refused to allow herself to think of anything associated with him. She had taken the will to Mr. Pine and had washed her mind of Charles Cullen and her conscience of Genevieve by giving over her share in the new will to the use of the child until she should be cured. As for Miss Bonner, she decided never to see her.

It was characteristic of her to pretend there had been no experience rather than admit its effects and build upon them—to take refuge in the past rather than in the future. But even while she was striving to fit herself into her outgrown chrysalis, the consciousness of her wings was slowly developing. She began to be aware that, though there was no difference in her way of life, she herself had altered fundamentally. She had expected by the aid of will power, hard work, study, and much collateral reading, to eliminate a sense of loss. What she did not expect and what came to her like a warm flood of light in the middle of one sleepless night, was a sense of gain.

For the first time in weeks her mind reverted to Genevieve. In moments of

affectionate intimacy Veevie had spoken of her home to Phoebe and always with a terrible distaste. Her respectful but obviously unloving allusions to her mother impressed Phoebe deeply. Once Veevie had summed up the problem.

"Gee, Mi's Brewster, I always wisht I was a man till I seen you. Women has got it so hard."

Through the curtain Genevieve had lifted for her, she was seeing her girls this term for the first time and for the first time understanding them and caring for them. They were responsive and she realized she was able to teach, apart from the curriculum, some of that finer learning—the history of persons, which is, after all, as important as the history of a people.

"I am a teacher," she thought, and suddenly she saw her profession in its true divinity and importance, beneath its obscurities and belittlements. It was her privilege directly and personally to inculcate her message into the coming generation; to build up in the young the hope of a new world, tolerant and wise. Toward that end all understanding was gain. It helped toward the great perception of the truth that must come like dawn upon the world some day, when sufficient knowledge was gathered together. Sympathy was knowledge, and the perfect comprehension and adjustment of one private quarrel was a spark, and happy are those who live to light a candle in the night.

She curbed her thoughts with a start. Those were Harvey's words that had so thrilled her at the time he was reaching for false fire or, what was worse, on the verge of bartering his flame. She lay for a while thinking of Harvey, marveling that the sharp edge of her repulsion was gone—the hate and contempt. She pitied him. She saw him passively rather than actively reprehensible. He, too, had had a

starved life even as her girls, even as herself. She saw his reaching into the future and grasping at happiness to come as a confession of his present failure. For one wild instant she had a desire to see him, to tell him what she had learned.

Then she remembered the gulf that lay between them. She could not deceive herself again. They were on different spheres. And she dismissed his image with a shudder.

One day in late February she met Gerald Lloyd in the street car. She turned her head away in the hope that he would not see her or would recognize the gesture as a snub. But he came over to her with so beaming a joy in the encounter that the woman beside Phoebe, after one glance at the handsome youth, changed her seat in the interests of romance.

"How lucky I am!" he exclaimed. "And you're looking——" He let his glowing eyes finish the compliment.

"I—I'm all right," she faltered, wishing she could think of something to say that would hint to him how unwelcome his cordiality was.

"I was thinking of you last week. You'll be surprised when I tell you why. I've been caught."

Phoebe exhibited less interest than the stranger on her left, who willingly overheard the conversation.

"Engaged, at last," affirmed Gerald in explanation. "We're having a little party at the house to-night to announce it. She's Grace Paterson. I'd love you to meet her. She's almost as sweet as—— Well, you were so obdurate, you know. Harvey will be there. Don't you ever see each other?"

"No."

"Of course, I knew about how uncle Charles balled it up at the last minute, but then—I shouldn't think—— You are married, anyway. Well, Bugs is beyond me! I shouldn't have given up like that. I told you once what I

thought of him and I'm right. Not a drop of red blood in him! He's a fish—not a man."

Phoebe rose blindly.

"I get out here," she murmured.

He got up gallantly and stood conspicuously with his hat off, the image of chivalry as Phoebe fled from him. She was a long distance from her destination and once she had abandoned that car she had a tedious wait on a windy corner for another.

At his party that night, Gerald told Harvey of the incident. Harvey proved his emotional anemia by looking unimpressed.

"And she looked," Gerald wound up, "like a queen! But then, you never *did* appreciate her. Are you jealous, Grace? Ask Harvey if I wasn't awfully stuck on her."

"Oh—you!" rebutted Grace. "Who is she, anyway?"

"Harvey's wife."

"Don't you let him tease you that way, Harvey!"

"Didn't you know he had a wife? The woman doesn't believe a word I say now. What will she be like after we're married!"

Harvey escaped to another group and presently, using a case he was worried over as an excuse, he deserted the assembly altogether.

He, no less than Phoebe, had concentrated upon work in the effort to forget. Gerald's words recalled her image to him as he had last seen her, small and frail, but dynamic, her dark-blue eyes filled with her blazing scorn. He remembered anew the almost uncontrollable desire her fury had roused in him to crush her in his arms and smother her aversion with fierce kisses that should kindle in her a comprehension of the torture she seemed above suffering. He did not doubt her capacity to love.

He wondered if she would have given him up if he had persisted in his

beliefs, but had refrained from that final mad outburst. It had been base of him, he knew, and perhaps it was doubly fine for her to see it so. Women seldom set honor above love, especially in their own cases. Honor—that blinding word! He was not so sure he was as far beyond its hypnotic influence as he had liked to imagine. He knew only that he was bitterly ashamed of that moment of frenzy in which his convictions had meant less to him than his desire. The thought of it cut him and made him wince like the lash of a whip across his eyes.

He stopped short for he had walked a few steps beyond the tenement that was his destination. With a shock he realized that he had been thinking more about Phoebe than he had dared to since they had parted. Then he forgot his own affairs when he looked into Mrs. Ryan's gray, drawn face that brightened with relief as she opened the narrow door of her flat to let him in.

His call made, Harvey walked back westward to the park, thinking. He had reached the park now and stood under the tall arch of fine elms, looking across the sweep of starry western sky. He completed the peaceful influence of the night by helping himself to a cigarette, and so he walked on slowly northward, smoking and gently swinging his little satchel. At first he only wondered at his own restful contentment, contrasting it with that turmoil in his soul of over six months ago. Gerald's flippant, careless words had brought it all back so clearly, yet with it had come neither agitation nor remorse.

As in a revelation he suddenly beheld the source of his serenity. For the last few months he had been happy in his work, interested and successful. He found, as he ran over his cases that he was fond of his patients, of even old Clanger, who lied so viciously about his diet, and of Keenan, who was so con-

sistently dirty and whining. They had a hard life, most of them. The economic struggle went hand in hand with their ignorance and superstition. Their laziness, filth, and dullness was grounded upon an unwholesome and impoverished childhood. If they could be taken in hand now—now—and taught even those simple facts of hygiene we have dug so laboriously out of the suffering of the past, perhaps that would be on the way to the accomplishment of the ideal future. Perhaps that was the "bug" he was to find. Perhaps he had his laboratory here, before him, after all, and these ailing people were his experiments.

"I am a doctor," he thought, and stood still, puffing a long thin trail of cigarette smoke. For the first time it seemed to him that he recognized the beauty and importance of his great calling.

"Whatever we know or don't know counts little against whether we care—whether, because we care, we can help, clumsily perhaps, but more than our knowledge warrants." He was reminded acutely of the look of confidence on Veevie's face, the trust with which she used to turn her head weakly but happily toward him in those days when she was so near to death.

"Knowledge will come, little by little. But we cannot wait. We cannot let the Veevies die. Some one must look after them—some one who cares."

He knew, he acknowledged, that the future he had once planned could not be his. But in its place he saw a finer present, progress and accomplishment from day to day.

CHAPTER XVII.

So the days went on, uneasy and portentous, and in April America entered the Great War.

Phoebe spent the summer taking history courses at Columbia and it was that fall, after she returned to school,

that she discovered that no amount of occupation or study could any longer banish Harvey from her mind. Men in the street, on the cars, suggested him to her. She would watch furtively with tremulous excitement the approach of any careless, loose-limbed figure, only to be relieved, but profoundly disappointed, when closer view revealed it to be a stranger. As the winter wore on the wish to meet him grew, and when she pictured such a meeting, the dread of it grew, too. For, after all, what was there for them to say to each other? She could not tell him she was sorry the second will had been probated, and in her wildest imaginings she could not picture him telling her that he was glad.

Nothing had actually happened to alter their relationship. Whether it was, as Phoebe in her sterner moments analyzed it, her own reaction to the war hysteria around her, the stirring and unharnessing of enthusiasms and sensations, or whether time and absence had softened and obscured all that was wrong, leaving in sharper contrast all that was fine in Harvey, she did not know. Sometimes she thought it was just curiosity that piqued her; then she remembered the look on his face in that last interview and loathed herself for the wave of passionate regret that swept over her for having thrown away his love.

"Love!" she would exclaim to herself derisively. "That is how Miss Bonner would talk! As if love were not merely incidental to any one who has a real aim in life!"

After a time she decided to hunt up Miss Bonner again. It was not, she assured herself, to hear news of Harvey, but because it was only the right thing to do to Gertie who had been so kind. And Miss Bonner might be able to tell her something about Veevie.

Miss Bonner, unreservedly forgiving, came to see her at once. Then it was

she learned how vain all her looking for Harvey had been. It was one of the first things Miss Bonner told her over her cup of tea in Phoebe's room.

"Why, yes, surely. He's been in France—let's see—about six months now. He sailed in August. He enlisted one of the first. In the Medical Corps, of course. He's a captain, I think. Phoebe, why don't you write to him? You could get his address from that lawyer of yours."

"I! Write!" gasped Phoebe.

"Well, I never did know how that old will made trouble between you," grumbled Miss Bonner reproachfully. "I wish I'd never ha' found it. I bet you'd have fallen in love with each other if you'd only been left alone another week!"

"Tell me about Veevie," said Phoebe.

"Veevie? Oh, she's fine! She's been staying with a married friend of mine in the country. Mrs. Farley—Emma Russell she was—she trained with me at Bellevue. She's a graduate nurse. She takes one or two paying guests in her home—convalescents mostly. You know, Veevie has an allowance of a thousand a year till she's all well."

"A thousand?" Phoebe raised her brows. So Harvey was sending her his interest money, too. "That's very fine. Is she doing well?"

"She's a cure, Emma says. I guess she'll go home after Christmas. She's going to study to be a teacher, like you. I believe some one is letting her mother have five hundred dollars a year on condition she lets Veevie go through with it. You ought to see how she's improved. She's fat and really getting awfully pretty."

One morning at breakfast, during those torturing months of doubt when the German drive was at its height, the newspapers, already cruel with bad news, dealt Phoebe a special blow, the weight of which she had never stopped

to calculate. She found Harvey's name in the casualty list, and further down on the page found a succinct little paragraph given over to him.

Captain Harvey Cullen Brewster, of the —th Medical Division, cited for conspicuous bravery under fire. Wounded by a bursting shell in a field hospital near the front lines, he refused to go off duty and continued operating until adequate relief was sent.

Phoebe looked through the basement windows to where the June sun already beat hot upon the city streets. People were passing out there. The hum of conversation and the clatter of breakfast dishes in that well-filled dining room came to her dimly as if they were part of a dissolving dream. Her own eyes saw only Harvey in blood-stained khaki, bending over dimmer figures, and on his face was the same fine fire of self-forgetfulness that had burned when he had attended Genevieve.

"It's terrible!" a voice behind her was saying raucously. "What with war flour and meatless days and the sugar shortage——"

"That's war," came the cheerful interruption.

Phoebe suddenly caught her breath on a racking sob.

"Mrs. Brewster!" exclaimed one of the guests, coming over to her quickly. "What's the matter? Are you ill? Are you going to faint? Here, take some water!"

"I'm all right." Phoebe sipped the water, smiled, and rose unsteadily. "I must go up and phone," she added, and left the dining room, conscious of the gaze of sympathetic eyes, and hugging her crumpled newspaper to her heart.

She phoned to Mr. Pine for Harvey's address. The longing to see him that had grown upon her in the past months now became an almost unbearable ache. She was aware she wanted him—to hold him in her arms. She was piercingly jealous of those nurses who could

bind up his wounds. There was no chance of going to him, but at least she could write.

She hardly knew how she got through school that day, but at last she was alone in her room and able to pour out her full heart in a letter. When she reread it she wept over it like an enraged child. It was so feeble compared with what she wished to express. But she posted it immediately and in due time the answer came that proved it had done its work satisfactorily. Harvey's letter was full of gratitude and love and happy reminiscences. About himself he said very little except that he was going to be ordered to Paris to do research work at the laboratories there—"another dream come true." He said his wound was not painful nor serious, just a bit ugly—"unless you object to a husband who hobbles. In that case, I shall die of it."

Separated by a sea alive with the perils of mines and U-boats, she felt as if they had really come together for the first time. She was glad her love had not waited for this avowal, but unspeakably gladder that this avowal had come spontaneously upon the confession of her love.

Her next letter and those that followed were so easy to write and so thoroughly gratifying. She could unbosom herself, sure of his understanding. Her candor awakened his and all that summer and fall they lived chiefly in their letters to each other.

Shortly after the armistice was signed Professor Treadling, in recognition of Harvey's work in the laboratories in Paris and not a little because of his heroic service at the front, secured for Harvey the promise of a post in one of the great New York institutes of bacteriological research. When Harvey wrote this to Phoebe, so complete was their sympathy that she understood perfectly his finishing up with the following incredible paragraph:

I do not know why I am not more elated. It is my ambition fulfilled. And yet, since working here in Paris, away from my boys down the line, I have been conscious of a feeling of loss. The human element is missing. I think if it were not for that pound or two of shrapnel that blew me here and makes a kind of cripple of me, I might have the nerve to refuse Treadling's offer and go back to general practice. Can you believe me, dear? And can you, at the same time, feel assured that none of that shrapnel went to my head?

He came back, a major, in March and Phoebe went down to the dock in Hoboken to meet him. She did not know him when she first saw him. In spite of the fact that he walked with a heavy stick and limped badly, he looked unexpectedly tall and trim in his becoming uniform. The sea bronze on his lean face helped in the illusion of youth and vitality. Later she was to perceive how bravely he hid the almost complete uselessness of his wounded leg, and that his hair was gray, and that under the healthy brown of his complexion there were deep lines about his eyes and mouth, and a

good-sized scar on his jaw from a wound he had neglected to mention.

Her hesitation in recognizing him awakened constraint in him and when he came up to her he held out his free hand to her, awkwardly formal.

"Hullo, Phoebe," he greeted, swallowing hard.

"Hullo, Harvey," she answered with unreal blitheness.

It almost seemed that their spiritual intimacy was about to play them false. They knew each other's thoughts so well, but their visualization of each other was built on memories nearly three years old. They searched earnestly in each other's faces, trying to cover their common embarrassment with a smile. In his eyes, calm but tired, appealing and a little bewildered, Phoebe found an even dearer Harvey, the realization of whose presence and need overwhelmed her suddenly. He saw the swift rush of tears that said more to him than any words, and the next moment he had caught her hungrily to his breast.

DREAMS

DREAMS are the star dust of Life,
 Dreams are the song of the spheres,
 Dreams are a story, a vision, a glory,
 A fragment, a flower of the years.

Dreams are the gold on the wing
 Of a moth that we never may hold,
 The castle whose portal dare mock at each mortal,
 The scroll that no hand can unfold.

Dreams are the sister of Life,
 Yet the Far-away Land is their own,
 Sans reason or order, they dwell on the border,
 Believed in, but never quite known.

The mystery no man has solved,
 The light that a miracle gleams,
 The real, the Elysian, a memory, a vision,
 A fabric Fate-woven—our dreams.

L. M. THORNTON.

The Lone Red Rock

By Henry Herbert Knibbs

*F*OLLOW me out where the cattle graze,
Where the morning shadows fall
On the far, dim trails of the outland ways
That wind through the chaparral;

*Follow me out where the free sons ride,
And the evening shadows rest
On a lone, red rock by the mountainside,
Where the wind of the night runs west.*

There's a song of the range, an old-time song
To the patter of ponies' feet,
That he used to sing as we trailed along
In the hush of the noonday heat:

*Oh, follow me out where the free sons ride,
Where the young coyotes play
On mesa level and mountainside——
And the trail that we ride to-day?*

Out there where the red butte stands alone,
And the brush dies down to sand,
Is the name of a friend—a mound of stone,
And the sweep of this lonesome land.

His name is there and a word or two,
And the brand that we used to run;
But his name could never mean much to you,
And the old, glad days are done.

*Oh, follow me out where the cattle graze——
We rode in the round-up, when
His horse went down in the dusty haze,
A stumble, a word, and then:*

*Follow me out where—— He tried to smile
As the bronze of his cheek went gray;
There's shade and a spring in another mile
On the trail that we ride to-day.*

So the twain rode on in the sunlit space,
Past yucca and ridge and stone,
The man who spake in that silent place
And his shadow, rode alone.



Contrasts *and* *the* Psycho- Analysts

By
Virginia Middleton

Author of "Charms and Philters," "Love at Forty," etc.

How the psychologists explain a certain contradiction of character that has seemed a mystery. It sounds plausible, doesn't it?

HAVE you ever reflected upon the modest incomes of the gentlemen who fill the columns of the papers with crisp utterances about walking the path of success? Has any one ever known the conductor of a "how-to-invest-your-savings" department to be a multimillionaire? Or, conversely, have any of the kings of finance, the well-paid captains of industry, ever taken time off from piling up their fortunes to tell their fellow countrymen how it was done? Did the late J. P. Morgan ever revise "Poor Richard's Almanac" and bring its maxims of thrift up to date for the benefit of the less pecunious of his fellows? Does the head of the Federal Reserve Bank edit any of the advice about budgets so copiously bestowed upon young households? Did the late Andrew Carnegie ever conduct the "Own-Your-Own-Home" section of a popular afternoon paper?

Recently our eyes have been much smitten with the joyful intelligence that Some One had published a volume which laid down the rules for absolute success in business. Tact, memory, an agreeable aggressiveness, the systematization of expenditures, the best means of frugality, were all taught the

candidate for material progress. "Success is as Easy as Failure—Why Miss It?" One struggles with a dim recollection of having once heard of the gifted author, and then "it all comes back"—he was the bankrupt of ten years ago. He was the man who used to live across the street but who was obliged to sell out four or five years ago—yes, the modest little man who used to seem to enjoy running his lawn mower on summer evenings, and who put up the garage for his second-hand Ford with his own hands. Yes, that is the man—"Success is as Easy as Failure—Why Miss It?"

And then there was the beauty specialist. Why should every woman not be lovely to the eye, pleasant to all the senses? There is no reason on earth. She has only to read Doris Dimple in the *Evening Vociferator*, only to practice the rules laid down by Doris and the great, good, all-deserved gift will be hers. Sometimes, to be sure, the conductor of a beauty department is a good advertisement for it. Sometimes she is even a famous beauty—or the name at the head of the column is the name of a famous beauty, beginning, perhaps, to be a little *passée*. Some-

times the conductress of the "Own-Your-Own-Body" department of gymnastic exercise is a world-renowned swimmer or skater or tennis player. Or, at any rate, the name under which the department is conducted is the distinguished one. Occasionally she—or he—is a physician whose incontrovertible rules for pulchritude are built upon health. But sometimes, often even, one's faith as a reader would be severely tried by a close view of the beauty preceptress. There was the little woman—you remember?—who used to live in the apartment across the hall—"the little brown wren," we used to call her. Yes, the one with the pleasant brown eyes shining behind her old-fashioned, gold-rimmed spectacles, and the gray hair and the funny little freckles on her nose that gave pleasant testimony to a country background somewhere. She used to compose the thrilling outbursts on the acquisition of glorious beauty in the *Morning Scream*.

Years and years ago, so the old folks tell us, long after the Civil War, there appeared in one of the Washington papers a series of letter written from the wine-growing districts of France. They were so charming that people used to watch and wait for them as we are told they used to watch and wait in England for the magazines in which "Old Curiosity Shop" or "Vanity Fair" was running serially. People began to save up for trips to France and French wines grew popular. And cathedrals, and sunny vineyards, and picturesque peasants, and village dances were on all tongues.

And it was known to only a few that the gifted correspondent of the paper was undergoing a humiliating incarceration in one of the jails of the District of Columbia for debt! In those days, you see, it wasn't regarded as illogical to deprive a man of the liberty in which to earn his living as a deterrent of the practice of running up debts any more

than it was regarded as criminal to celebrate the qualities of good wine. But that is merely by the way.

Once upon a time a certain newspaper had a most brilliant "society" department. The dinners it chronicled were brilliant dinners, and they were written about in the sprightly, intimate style possible only, one would have guessed, to a favored habituée of the dinner-giving circle. All the season's débutantes, in that paper, became familiar friends to its readers through the easy use of their first names—the department was obviously conducted, so it seemed, by a fortunate, life-long member of the gilded coterie. Scandals were touched upon, but not maliciously, amiably, rather, casually. "Well, you really can't blame poor George, you know—his wife is a Tartar and didn't have half the money he was led to believe. He's got to get distraction and compensation somewhere, and, after all, a taste for champagne isn't the worst thing in the world!" That was the tone—a tone palpably impossible except to one who was on the most familiar afternoon-tea and after-theater supper terms with George and his family. Even the signature of that brilliant society department was convincing—"Willoughby Parke."

And only a few ever found out that "Willoughby Parke" really was a thin, faded little spinster who was well known to the florist's clerks and the caterer's men, who supplied her with all that wealth of detailed information about the decorations and 'collations'—they were 'collations' in those days. And she knew, too, the vergers and sextons of all the fashionable churches and had favored vantage posts at the "society" weddings and funerals. She was indefatigable in her visits to costumers and milliners, and she consorted with the head waiters in the fashionable restaurants and held long talks with obliging butlers and ladies' maids. The

only persons mentioned in her department with whom she ever held personal converse were those who weren't really "in society", but who were only trying to get in, and thought that there might be a society column short-cut to the gilded portals where they would be. "Willoughby Parke" lived by herself in a lodging house and used, on many an evening, to bring home her dinner in a paper bag and cook it over the gas jet. Her cherished ambition was to accumulate enough money to buy a little chicken farm in the suburbs—an ambition which she was ultimately able to achieve.

Well, once upon a time, in the stern old days before the psycho-analysts came to revise and soften our judgments, we should, perhaps, have talked of fraud, should have denounced the Own-Your-Own-Home, the Why-Be-A-Hireling experts, the foreign correspondents, the beauty specialists, and the society columnists as tricksters. But the psycho-analysts are giving us a new angle from which to view what a generation which knew not Freud and Jung would have characterized harshly. The braggart, in the psycho-analysts' definition, you know, isn't the person with an overwhelming sense of personal importance and grandeur. He is the person struggling against a conviction of infe-

riority, trying to tell himself and his world that he's really as good as the next man. The ascetic isn't the tranquil-eyed, passionless saint, but the torrential nature incasing itself, for self-protection, against besetting temptations. And so it would, naturally, be the little brown wrens of the world who were really and humbly and wholeheartedly concerned with beauty, the shabby little men on the verge of failure who were really preoccupied with visions of success and the way to attain it, the drab, little women in lonely lodgings who could best visualize the glittering world of gayety and fashion.

It has always been so—even before we had psycho-analysts to explain it to us. The intensest realization of any good thing comes, not from satisfaction, not from satiety, but from abstinence, from deprivation. Emily Dickinson, that strange, elusive daughter of New England, said it earlier, and rather more beautifully, than the German scientists, when she wrote:

"Not one of all the purple throng
Who took the flag to-day.
Can tell the definition
So clear, of victory,
As he, deserted, dying,
On whose forbidden ear
The distant strains of triumph
Sound agonized and clear."

THE HOUSE THAT FELL DOWN

I BUILT my house of dreams out of rainbow rafters
And gossamer, wish-spun beams and doors and sills;
Out of pleasant pasts and luring, sweet hereafters,
And maybes and ifs and whens and perhaps-I-wills.
And it was a wonderful house and a pride-worth dwelling
And I went to its door and complacently sat alone,
And a fair, faint wind, too small and too weak for telling,
Blew, and my house of cards was overthrown.

And now I have no house with rainbow rafters,
And I walk the roads with a sturdy staff to-day,
And out of the fields and stars I make my own hereafters,
Instead of building with dreams, and, faith, it's a better way!

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.



The Strong

By Theodore Seixas Solomons

Author of "The Young Barbarian," "Garments of Failure," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. T. DENISON

A Story to Remember

THE golden age came and went with little improvement to the bungler, evolution. But in time to come, in some radium age of man, evolution, coached by our social philosophers, may breed a race of men and women devoid of the slightest tendency to fall in love with those already married. Blessed consummation to the earnest, anguished Hillyers and Moultons!

Hillyer's conscious efforts concerned only the present—the distressful present of many neurasthenic patients. Yet in the background of the man there must have lurked a glorious prevision of this future—a prevision and a glory in him of which he was never, perhaps, so little aware as on that morning of its dawn, a fitting morning radiant with June.

There were more smiles than tears in the voices of his callers, and Hillyer worked them through his consultation room with celerity. Dismissing the last one, he stood in the doorway, a spare man of some height, whose deep-set, friendly gray eyes seemed tiding bearers for the brain behind the massive forehead. As he turned, a white-gowned assistant brought him this letter:

PITTSBURGH, June 6th.

DEAR THIRD COUSIN: It is too bad that when we write to you so rarely it should be to ask a favor. However, if you are not *all* doctor by this time—and you used to be a little human—you will be glad to do whatever you can for Elaine Lansing, to whom I am giving this letter. Although that is not her name—her mission being a delicate one—nevertheless she is worthy of your entire confidence. But don't fall in love with her, Robert. Affectionately,

MARJORIE.

Dr. Robert Hillyer, Gainston, Pa.

The bearer of the letter proved to be a slender, erect young woman with dark eyes that were sweet and tranquil. As she gave him her hand Hillyer was aware in her of a great, though simple, beauty. She was very simply dressed.

"My cousin has written a very discreet note," said the specialist. "Am I greeting Miss or Mrs. Lansing?"

"It was perhaps unnecessary discretion." Her voice and manner were richly simple and natural. "While I am to be in Gainston I should like to be known as Mrs. Lansing, though any other name would do as well.

"I am here to do what I can for a man who is dying. He is a kind of recluse, poor and friendless. I should like to engage you professionally, if

you don't mind ministering as an ordinary physician. I want to go to him and take care of him in—in a natural way, as an employed nurse. But as I don't know him and he doesn't know me, I should be grateful if you could arrange it for me. I have no ingenuity. Have you?"

Hillyer smiled.

"It is all a little unusual," he admitted, "but I'm sure it's all right." He noted with pleasure the relief in her face. "Now, who and where is this sick man?"

He glanced at the slip of paper she handed him.

"John Ainsworth, who was for years in Pittsburgh?" he asked.

She nodded.

"I've known of him, of course. He was originally of Gainston here. Quite a while ago he straggled back, rather broken and old. I've heard nothing of him since then. My father knew him. That will be enough, perhaps."

The slip had contained directions which Hillyer's chauffeur found it difficult to follow. But at the end of several miles of not too easy going, he brought the car to a halt at an old wood road, which Hillyer and Mrs. Lansing proceeded to explore. Entering a glen, the abandoned road brought them unexpectedly to a pretty lake in a wooded hollow. From it a well-worn path led to an old shack half hidden in verdure. Hillyer went on ahead and was gone some time. He returned, thoughtful.

"He's a pitiful wreck! I fear his days are numbered," he told her. "And it's not altogether a pleasant case, nor a perfectly safe one. You are not a nurse, are you?"

"No, but I'm sure I can nurse him under your guidance. I think I shall be apt."

"But why not employ a regular nurse—not that it will better his chances?"

"I think I ought to do it myself," she answered.

"You must be careful, then."

Next morning he brought her, clad in nurse's white, to the bedside of her patient. It was rather a bunk than a bed in which John Ainsworth lay under a dingy cotton quilt. An oldish man—or the skeleton of one—with unkempt gray hair and beard, he had the apathy of those who are deeply sick.

Outside the shack, standing in a litter of axe chips, the physician handed the amateur nurse some written instructions to which she bent intently, while Hillyer, explaining, was curiously conscious of taking part in a kind of professional adventure—half unreal.

Day after day he brought her in the morning and took her away in the evening. Ainsworth, it appeared, was to die slowly. Weeks went by; weeks of gently comforted pain for the wasting man, and, for his nurse and doctor, of an inevitably ripening intimacy. They came to realize this shortly after Hillyer brought a night nurse and took Mrs. Lansing out for a long walk late each afternoon.

"Though, really, you don't seem to need it—visibly," he admitted.

"I am very well, very content—yes, almost happy," she assured him.

They were threading the narrow wood road. Hatless, she walked in a mud-hardened rut—it was her fate ever to walk thus, she said cryptically. But she drew him out of the other rut—he belonged upon the higher ground between! In this propinquity he was suddenly perceptive of the beautiful darkness of her hair and her sadly happy eyes; and the fancy came to him that this beautiful darkness was she—a house of loveliness dimly lit.

He stopped abruptly, a stopping that for many days had been growing to the act. To Hillyer, of a life-long, orderly, planning habit, this that he did was new and strange. He took her hands and looked in her face. She returned his look with fervid friendliness. In an

exaltation in which thought and feeling merged, he seemed conscious of a universe pliantly stilled of its rush of space and time, of living in the larger terms of life itself. The miracle woke in him an ardor for communion.

"Elaine," he said, "Elaine, it is a curious thing that I should know you so well—so well that the circumstance of who you are and why you are here is less than trivial."

"Lately I had meant to tell you, but it must have seemed—trivial, you say."

"Elaine," he breathed, "I love you! These worlds about us seem—your garments."

They had not moved. They were unconscious of their hands, united still.

"I love you," he whispered again. A great tenderness suffused him, enveloping her like an aura. For years to come, whenever he shall stand in the presence of the grandeurs, he is to feel again a little of the glow, a little of the glory of that surpassing tenderness.

"Robert," came her troubled voice, "I have been remiss. I have been passing with you into this strange land, from which the things of the earth beneath us seem dim. I should have told you that I am—still married—not divorced. Truly, I had almost forgotten."

Momentous disclosure though it was, its first impact stirred his memory only.

"You said that the name—that you wished to be known as *Mrs. Lansing*."

"Dear Robert, it was *Mrs. Lansing*. It is the *Lansing* that is fictitious—fictitious because I feel sure that if John Ainsworth were to know who I am he

would rather die alone than let me touch him."

Her straight gaze never faltering, the tears gushed from her bravely open eyes.

"Oh," she wept, "Robert, Robert, what is to happen? I would not bring you woe for all the world."

Beatitude still wrapping him, Hillyer came very slowly to the fact.

"It is



A well-worn path led to an old shack half hidden in verdure.

queer," he mused, "but as yet even this seems—remote. I am glad I love you; perfectly glad. And you——"

"Glad, too—to-day. Gladder than of anything I have ever dreamed. Tomorrow, perhaps—oh, let us go!"

Hillyer had been surprised at Ainsworth's tenacity of life; his disease should have brought death sooner. Mrs. Lansing, however, if an inexperienced, was an effective, nurse; she nursed with zeal, almost with passion. But his sands were now nearly run, and the following afternoon Hillyer found his patient brilliant-eyed in a last flare of fever. He was also, for the first time, talkative.

"It's a fine change here," he whispered hoarsely, rolling his eyes toward the nodding trees, "after the long grind in Pittsburgh. *Pittsburgh!*" He grew excited, beyond the control of the physician. "A great leech to the body of the earth, sucking out the coal and oil and ore. God, the forces! Smooth as velvet they work, till you get crosswise of them, and then they——"

His eyes rolled again, craftily, toward the door beyond which, embowered in greenery, Mrs. Lansing was washing. He whispered less hoarsely:

"Oh, honorable enough, according to contract. But get crosswise of the crafty ones, and you're honorably caught, squeezed, broken, and dropped between the rollers." Again his cautious glance toward the door.

"She thinks I don't know who she is. But the dying are canny, doctor. But I don't care—because she must be doing it without his knowing. She's the light they're blind to. They need her more than I do. God help her! Sh-h-h," he warned, and closed his tired eyes.

They did not open often after that; but he died looking at her quietly, giving no sign. Tenderly, her deft fingers closed his eyes.

Hillyer took her to the little lake.

"Tell me now," he said, "what you need to tell me."

"I need to tell you everything; that is what you are to me." She paused to gather, not so much her courage as her thought.

"I'm only in my late twenties," she began a little wistfully, "but I've gone through a hundred years of tragedy; tragedies—of nothing! I suppose I'm one of those women to whom only the nebulous *can* be tragic. To work one's fingers to the bone, to be cold, to starve, even, would be a part of life—nothing. But things I cannot touch, cannot even vividly describe—are part of death! My husband is older than I, though not in the least old. He is a very strong man and, under his code, a very straight one. We are—very well-to-do, more and more each year. He is a very busy, a very absorbed man. I live among men and women who are just like him, though somewhat less strong.

"Robert, I seem to live in a charnel house. They struggle for supremacy. The under ones—whom I rarely see—are pulverized, die, and make richer soil for the strong ones, who grow stronger still with the crushing strength."

Her eyes grew darker in their earnestness; her white throat labored.

"For half my married life I prayed for a child to give myself to. Then, I prayed to be spared it—that the child might be spared. These hands—look at them—empty till I came to him, one of the crushed ones."

"Yes," said Hillyer thoughtfully, "I noticed them, idle in your lap, when you came to me, the able, spatulate ends itching, no doubt, to be at the service of the slender, spiritual fingers. But your husband—have you not a kind of love for him?"

She released his hand.

"Yes; just what it is I do not know. But I know I hate just that in him which in you I love—the way of dealing with our humankind. I see you help and give, content to stand under and lift with all your strength the maimed

and marred and fallen. And I see him hinder and take, willing to use his great strength to drag down in order that he himself may stand the higher. But what is it he expects to find upon the pinnacle of these wriggling beings I cannot even guess."

"Poor girl!" He touched her dark hair with compassion. "Sweet, clear-eyed sleeper!"

"Robert," she ventured, "now that you know about me, do you hesitate to say you need me? Oh, let us at least speak our hearts to each other, man and woman."

"You have altered life for me, Elaine. Before, it seemed a fine task; now it has become a gracious gift. Of course, I want you, and I have you—have I not?"

"Yes—what I think is the best of me."

"The rest, all of you, as comrade, wife—that is for you to say. I should never think of importuning you, a married woman, held by a tie whose nature, whose value, is obscure to us both. I have a right only to bare my heart to your eyes and offer you my life. You must go where the light in you leads."

"No," she replied with gentle resolution, "where the light in you leads. My light? Ah, I see as through a glass—darkly. But you will have vision, wisdom to show what to do. Only give me work, work!" The passion of the woman surged; she held out eager hands. "Give me work for him and them or you and yours. You are skilled in caring for those who are spiritually sick with inanition; prescribe for me, then, an unuseful, a wasted woman."

"I will free myself from the webs of steel and come and be your wife—your wife!" she repeated, falteringly, to the almost overmastered man, "though I never thought to be that to another. And I will love you and your sufferers with all my heart and soul and might!

Or, I will stay and beat with my small fists upon the walls of steel." She wept, her face upon his coat.

"To-morrow I am going—home, it would be called. Write to me," she begged, "and tell me what to do. Write just as you would speak. You can do it; I cannot; I have spells of a kind of dumbness, and you must not mind if I am long silent. Kiss me, now, and bless me by telling me I am loved!"

He put his arms about her very lightly, as if she were a young maiden, and spoke many soothing words to her. When he bent his head to hers she turned her cheek to his lips.

Gainston, complete to the ordinary eye, was weirdly changed to Doctor Robert Hillyer. Its sap was gone; it was desiccated, cellular. In his leisure hours he locked himself away from it and lived again his scenes with Elaine, gathering from them the materials of the problem he must solve. At first it seemed to him that he lacked much necessary knowledge, but at length he came to know that, with a rare skill of delineation, Elaine had limned for him the essentials of a complete picture. He wrote her then, asking time—time to wrest from himself a true answer for her.

A man who had scarcely known his own reflection, several times he found himself before the bureau glass, curious about that Robert Hillyer whose spirit had challenged his soul to combat. For his soul longed for the fine and beautiful being that had come to him—a somnambulist whose open eyes were looking for a life wherein she might awake. But the spirit of Robert Hillyer was the spirit of a greater ministry. It held a flaming sword to guard them from their Eden.

One night he awoke, conscious of the sea under a vault of stars. He had been giving her up, but without abnegation, for he had not known it. But this surge



"I will free myself from the webs of steel and come and be your wife—your wife!" she repeated falteringly.

of the sea gave him abnegation. He made a light and wrote the letter telling her what to do. And in the writing of that letter he died and lived again,

Time passed. He wrote her once more, bidding her be of good cheer; but as she had warned him, no word came back. Several times he went to the little lake. The woods were very drear.

A few days before Christmas he came upon a letter in the morning's mail that set his heart thumping. In the corner was engraved, not Elaine Moulton, the name she had given him, but "Richard Moulton." The note was brief, almost sententious:

Might I ask you to call upon me—the sooner the better? RICHARD MOULTON.

Richard Moulton! Remote though his professional life had been from the atmosphere of the great industries, that name, prodigious in the iron world, had often flung itself headlong across his pages. Yes, there could be no doubt of it, for the engraved address was the

address she had given him. His letters had gone to that huge granite pile he had seen pictured as the mansion of Richard Moulton. What was it she had said—they were "very well-to-do?" He smiled—it was so like her. Well-to-do, indeed!

The Moultons craved an interview. Among many conjectures, he could make out with certainty only that.

Moulton awaited the man he had summoned in his library. A substantially handsome man, gray at the temples, he stood with his broad back to a blazing hearth. Except for an occasional glance at the clock, his eyes remained fixed upon the long table in the center of the room. When a servant announced his visitor, he took a few steps toward the doorway as Hillyer entered.

At first there passed between these two trained observers the casual glance of one who might say: "This, then, is he." Instantly it changed to: "Now

we shall see what manner of man this is."

They spoke each other's names with polite interrogation; then Moulton led abruptly toward the fireplace, covering in this celerity the omission of a proffered hand. Hillyer glanced about the massive room as if unwilling to believe that Elaine was not seated in some far corner. His disappointment was not unmingled with relief, for it was not pleasant to visualize the graceful, gracious woman here.

"You are satisfied that I am alone," asked Moulton. His face, rather pallid before, had gathered color.

"I suppose I was expecting still to see Mrs. Moulton," explained Hillyer.

Moulton's color mounted higher. He stood at one side of the hearth and tapped with his knuckles upon the carved panels at the back.

"My wife is not here, Doctor Hillyer. She—has left me."

"Elaine—has left you!"

"Has left me—yes—Mrs. Moulton."

"Pardon me. I called her Elaine because I knew her so very well."

Moulton took a slow step forward.

"Doctor Hillyer, I know little of you. Nothing, in fact, except that—judging from the medical journals—you are a specialist in nervous ailments, with a reputation widening out rather rapidly from your little city. I could have employed agents; clever, high-priced men are available. But because it was a matter of my own wife I preferred to learn what I must learn directly from you."

"I know nothing of your wife's leaving you. That, I infer, is what you mean. You will believe me, I hope."

Moulton sat down in a chair and gripped its arms.

"Yes," he said with slow gravity, "I believe you. It's not that. It's about last summer—her vacation, as she called it—that I want to know."

His hands were clenched as he came

and looked compellingly into Hillyer's face. But it was merely the power of the man flexing his fingers. Back of his imperiousness the diagnostician read dire appeal. There were beads upon his forehead as he said again:

"I want to know the purpose of this vacation of hers. First tell me that."

"No," refused Hillyer, "I will not. It's her own affair. I know it myself merely by surmise."

"Will you answer a question or two?"

"Oh, yes, if they concern myself."

"About your meeting my wife—Elaine?" He uttered her name in a slightly lower tone.

"She came on this errand, which is her own affair, bringing me a letter of introduction from a relative who asked my friendly offices in her behalf. I assisted her in certain ways. I saw her frequently—every day, in fact, for many weeks."

"Every day for many weeks," repeated Moulton, staring. "And what, may I ask, were your relations with her? Stop!" he warned, with sharp vehemence, as Hillyer was about to reply. "Don't lie to me! For her sake don't lie! For I have your truthful answer *there*." He pointed to some letters on the library table.

Hillyer looked at them. They were his own letters, unopened. With them was another addressed to him in the handwriting of Elaine Moulton, stamped but unsealed.

Moulton watched with a smoldering eye. It was easy for this master of keen men to read the pain, almost the thought, of Hillyer—the thought, bitter as hemlock, that these letters, born of great inner travail, had never seen the light of her approving eyes nor felt the refreshment of her grateful tears. He raised his head to meet the pitiless face of Moulton.

"Did she go away before these letters came?"

"As you see."

"And you did not forward them?"

"I could not."

"She left no address?"

A shadow crossed Moulton's face.

"None," he replied.

"As you say," admitted Hillyer bitterly, "these letters hold the answer that you seek. Why did you not—take your answer?"

Moulton could have struck him. The other almost felt a blow! But suddenly the man's anger died.

"You did not get that estimate of me from—Elaine?" he queried tremulously.

"No," assured Hillyer, touched. "In the little she directly said of you she made you out a man of honor—that sort of honor."

"As you seem to have been at least her confidante," suggested Moulton, meeting the unintended thrust, "I may assume she told you that we were—uncongenial—different. She had—problems—that were hard to get hold of."

He extended his hand; its thick fingers closed slowly upon—nothing!

"If her difficulties had been of a practical nature I could perhaps have done something for her. I expected, some day, when I might have more time, to try to." His thought changed. "She had been the most trustworthy person I have ever known. But when she returned after this long, mysterious 'vacation,' so strangely altered— And then when she—left me, after forgetting to mail this letter to you; and these of yours came, one after another—" Again his forehead glistened.

"God!" he pleaded. "Tell me!"

The habit of allaying torment tugged at Hillyer in the man's behalf. But stronger still was the mute imploring of the vanished wife to be purged of the imputation of faithlessness. Yet no mere words that he could utter would avail with Moulton, a man of the world. Only the letters could convince him. After all, his letters, still unopened, were his alone—mere memoranda of his

thought and feeling for the distraught woman who had fled them both.

"You sent for me to read these letters to you," asserted Hillyer. "Take them. They may be disconcerting to us both."

The older man raised his hand.

"No matter; I must settle forever my memory of my wife. I had thought her—I really don't know why—the best person I ever knew, though very likely she was unaware of this. But best or worst, I've got to know the truth!"

A man of implacable domination, he himself seemed implacably driven. His eyes ranged the gaunt length of the physician, his thick hands opening and closing.

"You make no stipulation for yourself against the chance of—rage?"

Hillyer tossed him the letters.

"None," he replied.

Moulton tore open the earliest letter and read it almost at a glance.

"Hard hit," he summed it up aloud. "Desperately, damnably hard hit, both of you! And she didn't know what to do about it, hey? So she left it all to you." He laughed sardonically as his fingers tightened on the other letters. "It is not hard to guess what you made up your mind to do with this beautiful, congenial, wealthy woman who—"

"Be silent!" flashed Hillyer from the hearth.

Moulton obeyed him with a glance of sneering cynicism. He opened the next letter, read its first lines swiftly, and stepped closer to the light, glancing up once or twice at Hillyer, whose thoughts were far away. Then he bent very intently to the letter. He read:

Let us, therefore, compare these two ways of living, weighing them, one against the other. On one side of the scales, my deathless love for you and the love you might have for me, and a life of devotion to these patients whose nerves and brains, whose hearts and souls, are all awry at life—a very natural way of living for a woman who is so eager to soothe and comfort; a living with a glow about it, like the glow on the bosom of the lake that late afternoon when

we dreamed—did we not?—of such a life together.

On the other side of the scales there is your need of finding usefulness in your present sphere. There is work for you here, though not for your fleshly hands—the striving to make these charnel houses of the worldly great houses of life. Here, too, are hearts and souls awry that need your healing influence more, perhaps, than any of my patients. Your instincts have been to meet, and not to evade, this task. But it struck and held you dumb—awed by an illusion of gigantic things, of Titans who, it may be, are really pigmies, playing in the mud. Upon *them* your maternalness may be richly employed. If it is a harder, it is also a rarer task.

But on this side of the scales, too, is your



"It is not hard to guess what you made up your mind to do with this beautiful, congenial, wealthy woman who—"

"Be silent!" flashed Hillyer.

husband—the decisive factor. Do you remember our one caress? The kiss you asked at our parting? *You received it with averted lips, upon your cheek!* The specialist in the field of the emotions becomes

skilled in reading certain signs; and I am too much a venerator of Mother Earth to ignore the significance of this one. No fine, unworldly woman like yourself, even in her youth, married a man wholly without wisdom. Choice made that bond. An unwise choice, it has seemed to you, with your empty hands, but in it deep purpose, to which we are almost blind, flowed through you.

You will know, dear Elaine, that this decision, if you accept it, leaves me wholly be-

rest. Yet, if you can be happy in your greater service—and I am sure you can—it will be exaltation for us both.

Moulton laid the letter on the table. "Hillyer," he said in a strained voice, "you're rather a new kind of man to me. You—you'd not be worth your salt in the iron industry."

"My business has been with final products," replied the neurologist reflectively. "with pains and tears, with the twisting hands of those into whose souls the iron has entered."

"But *she*," exclaimed Moulton, fingering nervously her unsealed letter. "What is it *she* has written to you—and feared to send!"

Sure of her, whatever the contents of the letter, Hillyer, standing close to Moulton, read aloud the message:

"DEAR ROBERT: Need I tell you how sure I am you will decide aright? No, for my leaving our fate in your hands has already told you that. But may I not tell you that I know what your decision will be? That you will keep me to my task; that you will make the supreme sacrifice for my sake? Surely it will be sweet to you to have this proof of the perfection of my trust and confidence.

"But I must not send it to you yet—not until your letter comes. For no less sweet to me will be the certain knowledge that I had not influenced your decision. How I shall venerate you for it, man of beautiful strength! And how I marvel at the wisdom that is to uncover to your inner eyes the path that shall lead a woman's errant heart back to her husband. ELAINE."

"She knew!" said Hillyer huskily. Of ineffable solace to him was this prescience of Elaine. But a new pain smote him. He turned upon Moulton angrily.

"Back to her husband," she says. "Tell me, man, *what did you do* to drive her away in spite of this?"

Moulton had taken the letter and raised it solemnly to his lips.

"One moment," he said gravely. "In giving me these letters you put your pride in the dust. You did it for her, but I am none the less grateful; for you have done me a service greater than

I can ever repay. I need not explain this service, because you are a man, among other things, of a very singular comprehension. Having done this for me, I owe you candor. I asked you to come here to get the truth from you, yes; but I proposed also to torment you with something of the torment I have suffered. I wanted first to see you livid with chagrin when you were confronted by these vain, unread outpourings of the heart of a lovesick thief. And then I wanted to see what kind of pangs would print themselves on your face and palsy your hands when I told you! But not now! Rather than utter those three words to you who loved her as you must have loved her to do what you have done—I——"

"Stop!" cried Hillyer. "To utter them would give you the greater pain." He put his hand over his eyes. "She is dead!"

"Dead," whispered Moulton. "Try to bear it as I have borne it."

Hillyer smiled wanly.

"She died to me the night I wrote that letter." He closed his eyes. Her death, strangely, brought him calm.

He looked at the man Moulton. A thought flashed to him.

"She died of what?"

When Moulton told him, Hillyer nodded sadly; hesitated; then spoke with reluctance.

"Perhaps you ought to know now that she spent her vacation soothing the last miseries of a broken man—a man whose hopes of conquests such as you have made were crushed out in a day by the juggernaut of competition—Ainsworth."

"Ainsworth! One of those we forced to the wall! Her mission, then, was mercy—reparation."

"She took his disease. You see, you could not stop your juggernaut."

Moulton turned away.

"Buck up," said Hillyer, specialist. "We'll all do better next time."

The Last Rose of Summer

By May Edginton

Author of "The Way the Wind Blows," "Angels," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

*She simply couldn't see her lovely young daughter married to such a man!
So she carried him off herself and— But we mustn't give the story away.*

MRS. MOLINEUX had left her sitting-room door ajar, hoping to hear Marjorie come upstairs. Unless she called to her she knew that Marjorie would not come in; the new sense of estrangement between them since they had begun to quarrel over Captain Jolley—a quarrel made up of bitter sneers on the mother's part, spirited defense of him on Marjorie's—would keep her away. Mrs. Molineux had the last of Anatole France's novels in her hand, but she could not read it, she was listening too intently. At last the sounds came; the stopping of a cab at the house; the opening and shutting of the front door; a slight flourish on the stairs.

"Marjorie!"

The girl came in, with the air of trying to veil conspiracy.

"Well, mother. It's very hot! Have you had tea?"

"Not yet." Then the question, very sweet and cool, though the mother's heart was burning. "And where have you been, darling?"

The daughter sat down, slowly drew off one white kid glove after the other, and looked pleadingly at her mother.

"In the park with Captain Jolley."

The novel dropped to the floor. Under her limp, luxurious rest gown Mrs. Molineux's whole body seemed to stiffen.

"Again! You know how I dislike that man!"

"You are extremely unjust to him."

The mother allowed herself an eloquent smile—no more. She knew girls. She was not going to say: "I will not have you fall in love with Captain Jolley! I will not have you marry him!" Fatal tactics those. That was the way to drive a romantic young girl straight into the adventurer's arms. A policy of little sneers, of raised eyebrows, of steady blackening of the man's character, was the one to choose—and all this in an innocent, unprejudiced way, as if any possible outcome of his glaring attentions to Marjorie had never occurred, could not occur, to her.

She said: "I have asked Charlie to come to the theater with us to-night," and watched her daughter closely.

Very composed was Marjorie.

"Have you, mother? How nice! I think I will get into something loose before tea."

That was all before the door closed behind her.

Mrs. Molineux lay back and closed her eyes. She looked very long, lovely, fragile, and tired. She was tired with the terror and the love for Marjorie. The lot that had been hers should never be the girl's. Of that—with bitten lips and scalding tears—she was resolved. She had married willfully herself, on attaining her majority and her fortune, a scamp who nearly broke her heart before he died. He had made no secret to her, after the ceremony, of why he married her.



While she lay there, before Marjorie and tea arrived, a servant came to tell her that a privileged friend had called and waited below.

"Lady Cherry may come up," said the woman on the divan.

The friend came in, all grace and charm, with an affectionate manner that veiled a purpose. So much was apparent easily to the shrewd, tired, beautiful eyes of the woman among the powder-blue cushions. The purpose revealed itself after a few preliminaries, such as: "How hot it is!"

"Isn't it!"

"But as usual you look deliciously cool."

"You are extremely unjust to Captain Jolley." Very composed was Marjorie.

"I'm one of those chilly people, you know, my dear."

"And your girl—she is in this afternoon?"

"Yes; just getting into something comfy. You'll see her——"

"Oh—I was wondering if I should find you alone."

Mrs. Molineux looked at the visitor.

"If you will ring, my dear—thank you. I am almost too lazy to get to

"We are all expecting to hear some news."

"News?"

"Captain Jolley and your dear girl, of course. He never leaves her, does



he? It is really rather charming to see a man of his type so completely in love." This with an

obvious lack of sincerity, and a quick, sidelong look at her hostess. Then, decided by the look, Lady Cherry cast away the veil. "Oh, my dear Rose, *do* you think it desirable? I have no doubt that you know all about him, and even in these days when a daughter is perfectly independent, I *do* think that you should stop it."

"Stop what?" She wanted to stop the tongues of gossip. She wanted Marjorie's name to go uncoupled with

the bell. Parker," to the servant, "take Miss Molineux some tea, and say I hope she will lie down for a while."

So they remained alone, and over the teacups the purpose came out.

Jolley's. So she raised her eyebrows and smiled at the caller.

"My dear," replied her ladyship, "every one is talking."

"What are they saying? Be frank, Maud. I need amusing."

The friend, perhaps, saw through the disguise, but she was frank.

"Every one says the Jews have got him. He spent all his money, you know, when he came into it, and left the army. And now he is looking for a rich wife, of course; and people know that your girl——"

"Yes," said the woman on the divan languidly, "she will have a great deal too much money for a young girl next year, when she is twenty-one. An aunt left it to her, you know."

"Well, we all know the danger of fortune hunters," said her friend. "I hear he was trying a little while ago to get some colonial post; but no doubt if he manages to fix up something pleasanter at home, we shall see that dropped."

Two spots glowed luridly on the widow's pale cheeks. Her eyes and her smile, however, were calm.

"So nice of you to look in, dearest," she said presently, when she bade the caller good-by, "and, of course, it will be sweet of you to contradict this silly rumor about Marjorie and that man when you meet it."

"I do really sympathize——"

"How sweet of you! But there is no need."

Alone again, she sat down in a corner of the blue divan, knitted her brows fiercely, and drove back the tears that rose to her eyes. Whatever happened, Marjorie should not marry Jolley. Marjorie must have love. She must never know the aches, the pain, the bitterness and humiliation of starving for love; she should never be at the mercy of a man who would teach her these things without remorse, as her father had taught her mother.

But you must go easy with girls if you are a mother aged forty. You must be cunning. Their generation is not your generation, and their ways are not your ways. They have not yet been married and put to school, and they won't believe what you tell them.

The tears fell down into the lap of the limp, luxurious rest gown.

Presently she went to dress for an early dinner and the theater party of three; herself, Marjorie, and that nice, desirable boy, Charlie Mitcham, rich enough to be above suspicion.

If only it were, as she had hoped and prayed for, Charlie Mitcham instead of Jolley! But it is always the clever roué who catches the fancy of a romantic child. Did she not know? Had she not been caught, and suffered in the trap, twenty years ago?

"Oh, any old thing!" she said to her maid. "The black will do." Then she sat down before her glass for the hair-dressing, and looked at herself without interest. She had the slenderness, the contours, and the coloring of Marjorie, and the youth she lacked was balanced by the finish, the aplomb, and all the vast knowledge of the woman of forty. She knew, without interest, that she was still lovely.

What matter? She had never had love; neither had she, after her sharp lesson, ever expected it. The men who had approached her after her release she repelled. "Never again!" she said. "Never again! God has set me free."

She did not want them; she did not want to attract them; she did not trust them; no, not one. She had given up thinking, except in so far as it pleased, personally, her own fastidious sense of her attraction. Yet, suddenly, the lurid spots returned to her cheeks; her tired eyes blazed into the mirror.

"No," she said to her maid, "wave my hair, and dress it low." And, when that was done, softening her face to wonderful youthfulness. "Not the

black frock. I'll wear that new primrose thing, and the black velvet cloak, and my pearls."

And while the maid denuded the primrose thing of all its tissue-paper wrappings, she took up the mouthpiece of the telephone installed by her dressing table, and, not hesitating over the numbers—had she not learned by heart all the hateful details of his outer life?—she rang up, first, Captain Jolley's club, and then, being told he was not there, his private address.

In a moment he was answering her.

"Mrs. Molineux. . . . Oh-h-h . . . I . . . how . . . how very kind of you to ring me up! . . . Join you at the Duke of York's? . . . You are too kind! I was engaged. . . . No, I'll come, thank you. I would cut any engagement!"

She rang off, before he could say much more, with a curt: "Good-by, then, till nine." She did not want his conversation.

She met Marjorie at dinner, in the primrose thing, with the old-rose ceinture, and her pearls, which were notorious, and she hung the black velvet cloak over her chair so that it made a background such as the night sky makes for a star.

"Oh, *mother!*" cried Marjorie, young, humbled, and eclipsed.

In their box at the Duke of York's, the elder woman took possession of Jolley. He was at first a little bewildered, then joyful—absurdly joyful, she thought with contempt. His experience should know better than to show his hand like that. She read him, of course—every one of his fluctuations, his poses, his thoughts.

At first it was, scornfully to herself: "He's playing to Marjorie's mother. Now he's showing respectful pleasure that the haughty parent has relented. These are the delicate attentions of the hopeful son-in-law."

Did she not know them, these rakes, these sneaks, these thieves?

Then, as the evening progressed, and Marjorie was paying but abstracted heed to young Mitcham, it was: "Now he's beginning to see my suggestion—the mother is richer than the daughter, and since, after all, she's so agreeable, well, why not? Why not?"

She meant to marry him. She meant to remove him irrevocably from Marjorie's matrimonial horizon. After all, it would not be so very terrible, a second of these ugly unions. Nothing could hurt her much any more; and she was forty, and as bitter as aloes, and *she could deal with him*.

"Yes," she found herself saying silently, while she looked at the brown, suave, well-groomed man with her great, smiling eyes, "I will deal with you! Money? You shall have it, and I'll make you fetch and carry for your wage like a lackey. I'll make you eat dirt."

She did not let him give them supper, though he wanted to give it badly.

"No, Captain Jolley, I'm taking my little girl straight home. So nice of you to come! Good night, Mr. Mitcham."

But she added that Captain Jolley might call to-morrow morning. Why not lunch? So pleased!

The car purled along through the congested traffic.

She saw Marjorie peering at her several times through the semidark of the car, but their conversation was sparse.

The next day Jolley came, bringing roses for Marjorie's mother, not for Marjorie. She had sent her little girl, she said, to lunch with Maud Cherry, so they would be alone; she hoped he would not find it too dull.

Dull!

The man's acting proclaimed him in a heaven of rapture. She considered, contemptuously, that he overdid the part a trifle; otherwise it was not bad.



She rang off, before he could say much more, with a curt: "Good-by, then, till nine." She did not want his conversation.

A woman less versed in the subtleties than she, might, indeed, have been enchanted.

So they lunched alone, and he spent most of the afternoon in her sitting room with her, talking rather well, though with reticence, which she classed as guile.

For a week she saw little of Marjorie; she felt very constrained in the girl's presence and talked with her only artificially. Marjorie on her part seemed strange, hesitating, and as if trying to exercise, inexperienced as she was, great tact in a difficult situation.

The mother longed for her arms and her real kiss again. She felt forlorn and dreadfully babyless.

"Of course," she adjured herself, her head buried in the blue pillows on her divan, "it will be like this always when Marjorie marries, but——"

But it went hard.

After that week, in which she had been alternately kind and cold to him, for she could not always school herself, Jolley proposed to her. It was a strange environment to choose for a proposal, but of course he did not care. Still, she felt that it was a little inartistic.

tic of him after such really well-arranged preliminaries. It was over a lunch table at the Carlton. He did it very quietly and almost shyly.

"You must have seen that I admire you very much! I have a great—great affection for you, which—I should be very, very happy——" And so on.

She kept her great, smiling eyes on his face the while, and noticed that he went very pale, and that his hands trembled.

"He's very far dipped," was her diagnosis. "I'm his last hope. He feels that Marjorie is lost to him now."

There was exultation in that. Marjorie was lost to him now. Even a blind, darling little fool of twenty would not, of course, look at a man who had been courting her mother. It would be so—so against all the canons of romance.

She accepted Jolley, however, to make sure. Men of his type were marvelously clever; unless she herself wore his wedding ring she would, somehow, never trust him with Marjorie.

From being chalk pale, the man went brick red from his brow to his collar rim, when she said in her sweet, unhurried drawl:

"I do not pretend that it is a surprise; and I think we might—be—happy together, mightn't we?"

The pretty hypocrisy of that stung her a little, but on the whole it was wonderful to her how resignedly she could swallow the pill.

He thanked her by a few words in a shaking voice, and she saw in his eyes a sort of red humidity, extraordinary softness; he appeared much moved, though he was very quiet. She remarked to herself that cupidity, not Cupid, must be a stronger passion than one could have imagined possible.

Lunch went on, under much the same conditions as before, except that he took occasion to call her "Rose," and once, very tentatively, "dear." And

now and again she gave herself the trouble of putting something of archness, tender suggestion, into her voice and smile. It amused her to do it.

Jolley asked with an element of brusqueness mingling with his curious reserve, when they might be married.

"As soon as possible," she said.

"Then, in"—he made a brief calculation, and dared quietly—"a week?"

Leaning back in her chair, toying idly with her ice, she consented.

"Yes, in a week. And you know, I'm a creature of whims—so silly! We are not to announce our engagement!" She wasn't going to give Maud Cherry or any one else a chance of whispers, shrugs, and kind remonstrance of friend to friend.

She continued to issue her arrangements.

"No one is to know. I'm sick of fussy weddings! Aren't you? One sees so many. But some morning—in a week, if you like—you may call for me, we will go out together, get married, and start on our tour." She refused to say "honeymoon."

"Thank you," Jolley said, his voice husky—he *must* be in a bad corner—"thank you! In a week from to-day, then—that's next Tuesday—I'll call for you at twelve."

"Very well," she nodded.

"I ought, traditionally, to hurry on the day, of course, as you are so kind. I ought to—to beg you to come out and do it now, and all that, you know. But under a week, I'm afraid, I can't make arrangements."

She almost said to him: "Oh, tell your creditors that you're marrying me shortly, and you can get practically anything you like at an hour's notice," but she refrained. After all, there would be plenty of time afterward to make humble pies for his consumption.

"Take me home," she commanded sweetly, "and mind, not one word to Marjorie!"

"Of course not, if you say so. I should rather have liked to let her know——"

No doubt!

"Not a word to Marjorie!"

The week went by like lightning. Ordinarily existence was not too fleet-footed; the days had palled; the nights had not succeeded always in bringing oblivion. But this week she slept well; and when she awoke, always to the remembrance of the imminent passing of her liberty, she could not find time enough to do all that she wanted to do. Besides more tangible occupations, in the quiet of her blue sitting room, she took down memories from their shelves, dusted them, and looked at them with wide and tearful eyes. There was her first wedding day, full of hope and the sweetest joy, like the essence of all the springs that ever were. Never mind what came after, there *had been* that springlike joy. She had had it once.

Then, after great disillusion perhaps, arrived the baby, with a loud reawakening of joy.

Love of a lover she had never had. She gave herself the luxury of weeping over it a little, now that she was on the edge of repeating, open-eyed, her mistake. She cried softly, thinking: "All my spring I had no love; and all my summer I've had no love. No roses all my life. And summer is nearly over, and there's no time now—nor chance——"

After thus indulging herself as women must, she felt better, as women do, and her cynicism returned to triumph over her weakness.

All the same, Tuesday was upon her suddenly, like a stab in the back, as she was still standing with her face to such few memories as she could cherish.

She breakfasted reluctantly in bed; dressed reluctantly; ordered her maid reluctantly to pack trunks, to be in

readiness to start, with luggage, in reply to a probable telegram.

Jolley came at twelve in a taxicab.

She descended, in a very plain but very beautiful toilette, all in the most subtle shades of rose. She carried a long-handled parasol to match and a vanity bag, and looked as if she were just going for a stroll down Bond Street to see her dressmaker before lunch.

They were married at a registry office—it had been her wish—and at one o'clock they were again outside it.

She put up her sunshade and turned to him with her faint, attractive smile, masking a hatred of surprising vigor in a philosophical woman of forty.

"What's our program?"

"Since you left it entirely to me, lady, we are catching the one-forty train from Paddington."

"To go where?"

"South Coast."

"Very well," she said. "Wire for my maid."

"You would like the South Coast?"

"As well as anywhere."

Jolley looked at her carefully, and smiled.

"Yes. What you really want is something quite new, of course; I expect you're sick of the Continent. I supposed Cornwall would do as well as anywhere."

They were to stop, it turned out, at Fowey, for a day or two, then go to any place she might choose. She acquiesced civilly, and felt glad they were going to stay at the big, comfortable hotel overlooking the harbor. He had taken the best rooms obtainable, too, and had had flowers put on her dressing table. She took them up languidly and said: "Oh, thank you!" thinking the while that such attentions were really unnecessary now, and wondering a little if she would be called upon to pay her honeymoon bill. If so, how—how truly amusing!



He was asking behind her: "You— you like this room—dearest?"
"Very nice, thanks."

He came close to her.

"Have you brought that pale, yellowy dress with the pinkish sash that you wore to the theater that night?"

"Yes. I think Marie put it in."

"Will you wear it?"

"Certainly."

"Can I help you—help you in any way, instead of that woman?"

"Oh, thank you! I prefer Marie."

Presently she was dressed, and went down to dinner. Afterward, Jolley suggested going out.

"It's a perfect night! Have you that black velvet cloak?"

"How you remember! I expect it was packed with the frock."

He went up to see, returned with it, and wrapped it round her.

"Aha! But I've got a missus to provide for now." She trembled helplessly and wanted to cry on his shoulder.

"Where are we going?" she asked wearily.

"Somewhere quiet."

He found somewhere quiet very cleverly, and she wished he had not. She disliked him and herself and her honeymoon too much to wish for any pretense at sweetness, to find any charm in privacy. She supposed ironically that he thought she expected it, and she decided to undeceive him for his own relief and hers.

They stood among trees and looked out at the glimmer of sea under a bright moon.

He began talking, and she found herself listening to his rather pleasant, eager voice.

"I wish we'd told Marjorie! You say you sent her to Lady Cherry? She would have loved to know it came off, you know, dear. She was such a ripping little conspirator! Why did you start? Let me hold your arm. I confided in her from the first, you know, and she tried to help me all she could—but weren't you cold and aloof and difficult, darling! All the solace I could get was talking to our little girl about you, till that night, you know, at the Duke of York's!

"I was never so clean knocked out in my life as I was that night! You'd been so absolutely unapproachable, and I'd worshiped the ground you walked on. I wish I knew why you gave me such a deuce of a time! Perhaps some day you'll tell me? Why are you shivering? You are cold!"

"Not at all," she denied faintly. "So Marjorie tried to help, did she?"

"She said she used to talk to you about me, and you shut her up every time!" A laugh. "Poor young Mitcham'll be glad she's not occupied with our affairs any longer!"

Then she used his name for the first time.

"Raymond—Raymond, I——"

"You're shivering, dear. You are cold!"

"No, not cold." She was burning from head to foot. "But even a woman of forty finds getting married rather—rather exciting, you know."

"Of course!" His arm went about her and she had a warm, alien sensation of being cared for. "I wonder," he said, "if you'll like the life you're going to. It will be something quite new for you, anyway. I've got that

job, you know, in Canada; I must tell you all about it when you want to hear. That's what I've been settling all this week—that, and other affairs. I'd let things get in an awful mess, I'm afraid, but a man is a fool when he's only got himself to think for. However, everything's straight now, and I've got the job."

Her low-voiced murmur did not reach him. He bent his head to hers.

"What is it, sweetheart?"

She tried again.

"In Canada? I should have thought—thought that as you'd got married you would have given up all idea——"

"Aha! But I've got a missus to provide for now."

She trembled helplessly and wanted to cry on his shoulder.

"You may know," she managed to say, "that I have money——"

"My sweet dear," he said with loving scorn, "you don't expect a man to live on his wife's money—or to let his wife, either, for the matter of that, do you? No, you'll have to keep house on mine. I'm one of those nasty, proud, stubborn chaps, don't you know?"

Then she let her head fall on his shoulder and cried till he put his hand under her chin, lifted her face to his, kissed her lips till they could have kissed forever and her eyes till they could have slept forever and her throat till it could have sung forever.

"No tears," he besought. "No! No! Not on your wedding night. You mustn't mind having a stiff-necked sort of a husband, you know. He'll take care of you, all right!"

"I don't mind," she said.



Mrs. Cardigan's Crime

By Kay Cleaver
Strahan

Author of "The Dimity Dress," "That Little Town," etc.

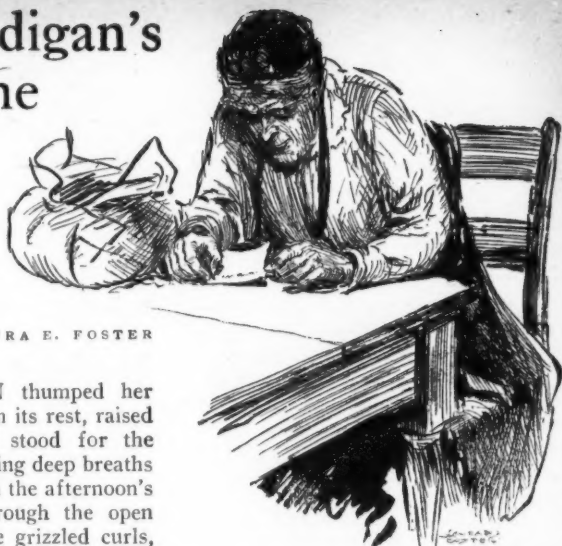
ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

MRS. CARDIGAN thumped her flatiron down on its rest, raised her head, and stood for the space of a minute drinking deep breaths of the wind, moist from the afternoon's rain, that came in through the open window. It stirred the grizzled curls, pasted sleek and wet across her forehead, played with the blue calico ruffles on her wide bosom, and fanned a warm fragrance from the long, high lines of ironed clothes which gave to the little room the appearance of a stalactited cavern.

"I'll maybe catch a sneezin' cold," she murmured, "ironin' here in the wind, but the coolin' off is worth it."

It was remarks embodying a philosophy such as this that had caused her neighbors in Mud Flats—that indelectable portion of the town lying north of Main Street and across the tracks—to adjudge Mrs. Cardigan as "quare." But since it is human nature to prize the exotic, and since no dweller of the flats could find flaw in Mrs. Cardigan's moral texture, her queerness increased rather than diminished her popularity.

In truth, Mrs. Cardigan was something of a sensualist. Witness the fact that she did her ironing in her "best room" or "parlor." It meant fifteen steps to the kitchen stove, and fifteen steps back to the ironing board each



time she had to change her cooling iron for a hot one. A palpable waste of time and of energy but, to remonstrants, Mrs. Cardigan explained that the parlor was cooler, that the breeze came in through the north and west windows, that through those windows she could see her bits of gardens, and that she guessed it was her own business, as long as she always got her washings delivered on time.

She had many peculiarities, had Mrs. Cardigan, such as paying ten cents each spring for a bunch of fresh vanilla leaves to hang in her kitchen, growing lavender in her yard and putting sprigs of it in the bundles of laundry before she sent them home, and bathing, some said as often as twice a week, in her washtubs. Had she been less simple, less honest, these peculiarities would have won for her anathema; but of all the inhabitants of the flats none was as free from pretensions as was Mrs. Cardigan.

She claimed for herself no fine connections in the old country. During Mr.

Cardigan's lifetime she had never excused a black eye nor bruised cheek of hers with references to falls on the bedposts or doors ajar in the dark. She explained the fact that she did not keep a pig with none of the customary evasions of nonowners of pigs in the flats, but with the statements that she had no money to buy a pig, no table scraps to feed a pig, and that she did not intend to starve herself to fatten a pig.

Of these and kindred honesties the neighbors approved; but when her one child ran away with a member of The Hanskill Negro Minstrel Troop and Mrs. Cardigan neither boasted of Eily's improved position in society, nor bragged of the luxuries with which a devoted husband was surrounding her daughter, in the city, there were those of the flats who decided that she was carrying honesty to lengths almost shameful. Though what, they asked, could be expected from a woman who, when she had found a striped silk bag with a dollar in it, had advertised it on the bulletin board in the post office?

Eily had been gone for more than a year, and during this time interested inquirers had been able to elicit but three statements concerning her from her mother: that Al Gittins, despite his position, was no more a nigger than she was herself; that Eily had been decently married to him by a priest, and that a baby was now expected.

On one end of Mrs. Cardigan's ironing board, this evening, lay a letter. From time to time her eyes went to its shabby envelope and she sighed. Mr. Gittins was objecting to an increase of family. He had lost his position and was out of work. The rent was overdue and Eily feared that the landlord would put them out on the street. But to Eily all these troubles were but evanid when compared with the fact that for the coming baby there was nothing—not, she wrote, so much as a flannel band—in readiness. So—with

this the letter closed—unless her mother could send her a few little things, her baby, when it came, would have to lie wrapped in an old coat of Al's.

"A few little things," Mrs. Cardigan repeated as she pulled out the ruffles on Helen Dowaren's organdie dress.

"A few little things," as she cold-starched the cuffs of Mr. Dowaren's shirt.

For weeks she had been going without the necessary amount of food in order that she might send the extra pennies to Eily, and now a lightness in her head and an odd, shaking sensation about her knees warned her that she dared not further reduce her scanty fare. Things, no matter how little, cost money; more money than she had, more money than she could see any possibility of obtaining.

"Are you there, Mrs. Cardigan?" The words came through the kitchen followed closely by Mrs. Bradley, neighbor and competitor. "And are you still at it, this late of a Friday? If you'd iron near your stove now— But what I dropped in for was to ask, had you heard about Brian McGill?"

"Him that stole the cow off Orin Sells?"

"Aye, and to-day the judge give him five years in jail for it."

"Think of that, now! And ain't it the pity? I'm doubtin' the poor lad wanted the baste more'n one year at most."

"I don't know as I take your meanin'," frowned Mrs. Bradley, "but be sure, had the boy known they would catch him at all, he'd a let the cow stand in Sells' meadow till it died of dry rot. Him with his fine job in the mills, now that the old man has died and the new owner, Mr. Harlowe, has come; as grand and fine a young gentleman, they say, as ever drew breath."

"I do hear," supplemented Mrs. Cardigan, "that the old man's house is not swell enough for 'em, and that they



"Are you there, Mrs. Cardigan?" The words came through the kitchen followed closely by Mrs. Bradley, neighbor and competitor.

are stoppin' at the hotel while a new house is buildin'."

"Aye, and there's a baby comin', I hear, though how the word got about I can't tell; and it must be long away, for herself looks as young and as spry as if she had been married but a week."

If Mrs. Bradley had hoped for an

hour of gossip she was unfortunate with her topic, for, at the mention of the baby, Mrs. Cardigan's attention flagged and she became so noticeably remote that her guest soon departed, affronted and offended. But Mrs. Cardigan, ironing Mrs. Dowaren's silk stocking, scarcely noticed Mrs. Bradley's absence.

Her mind had returned to the harassing problem of the "few little things."

So absorbed was she that, when the long, gray automobile came jolting and tipping over the narrow road and stopped in front of her house, she did not hear it; nor, when the knock came did she, as was her custom, peek out of the window to estimate the importance of her callers. Had she done so, she would have buttoned the top button of her wrapper and turned her apron to its cleaner side before going to the door.

The consciousness of these omissions so embarrassed her and she was so busy attending to them that the young man had set the suit case inside the door, and the young lady, with a final winning smile, had asked her for the third time please to be very careful with the little things, and they had turned and were walking down the path before Mrs. Cardigan had prepared herself to receive them.

Flushing with shame, she backed into the room, closed the door, and bent over the suit case. For twenty years she had, at different times, made dainty the clothes for other people's babies; but never before had she seen such exquisite bits of linen and lace and cashmere as were now revealed.

The young lady had explained, Mrs. Cardigan remembered, that the things were not soiled but, as they were rumpled from packing and as she had no way of pressing them at the hotel, she had brought them to her to be made fresh and creaseless.

She picked up a cashmere sacque, poked her fingers into the tiny sleeves, and smiled. She hung a soft white flannel band across her arm and smoothed it lovingly. She fitted a hood over her fist and tried to imagine a human head as wee as that. But Eily's baby would be just that wee, just that helpless, only he would have no embroidered sacque, no warm, protecting flannel band, no grand bonnet with rib-

bons to tie under his chin. He would lie wrapped in his drunken, good-for-nothing father's old coat.

Darkness began to sift into the little room. On the ironing board lay one of Mrs. Dowaren's stockings, like a tabid snake, on the rack the iron was cold, and in the stove nothing of the fire remained save its ashes; but still Mrs. Cardigan sat fingering the pretty things, fascinated by them as beautiful women are fascinated by jewels.

"Babies," she spoke aloud, at last, "they can't help themselves, so other folks ought a help 'em."

It had taken her an hour to reach this conclusion and it marked the end of one trail of thought and the beginning of another trail in her mind; a trail whose windings it would be impossible to follow, but which brought her, in the end, to another conclusion.

"I don't know," she mused, "but I guess it ain't not much bigger'n a cow."

With that she rose, went into the kitchen, and lit the oil lamp. From behind the corner cupboard she took a bandbox, and with it under her arm, and carrying the lamp in one hand, she returned to the front room.

The following Wednesday the gray automobile came again through the flats and stopped in front of Mrs. Cardigan's house; but the occupants of the car, instead of descending, sat still and stared at the place, amazement and consternation written on their faces.

Five days ago the house had been an untidy, lively little house; now it was as neat and as quiet as a dead thing. The tall grass in front of it had been closely shaved; the windows were closed, and behind their shining panes newspapers had been tacked in lieu of blinds; through its pipe of a chimney no smoke came puffing, and the active sign which had read: "Washing Done Here," had been changed for a dreary thing that said this house was for rent, and directed visitors to call next door.

The young man was preparing to start the car on its way when the front door opened and Mrs. Cardigan popped out of it and called to them. It was as astonishing as if, from a clock which had stopped, the bird, in defiance of mechanisms, had suddenly burst through its closed door and begun to cuckoo. The girl gave a little squeal of surprise.

"Oh," she said, as she came up the path, "we thought you had moved."

"Will you please come in?" Mrs. Cardigan invited.

The girl hesitated on the porch.

"If you have the things ready——"

"The valise is here," said Mrs. Cardigan, "but I have stole the baby things."

"I beg your pardon?" smiled the girl.

"I have sent all the baby things to my daughter who has a baby comin'," Mrs. Cardigan further explained, "and I'm a' ready to go to jail."

The girl looked at Mrs. Cardigan's brownish-black shawl, at her small black bonnet with its wry purple pansy.

"I don't," she gasped, "at all understand——"

"I have stole the baby things," repeated Mrs. Cardigan, a note of gentle patience in her voice, "and I'm a' ready to go to jail. I don't know as they was bigger'n a cow; but, anyway, at my time of life, five years or ten don't make much difference."

The girl backed away, her eyes widened, and turning, she called to the young man:

"Hal, will you please come?"

At first the young man was inclined to bluster.

"See here," he said, "you can't do that, you know! You can't send our things off like that!"

"But I have, a'ready," Mrs. Cardigan gently reminded him.

"Then you'll have to get them back here to us, and in short order."

"No," Mrs. Cardigan was still pa-

tient, but firm, "no, I couldn't to do that! But I'm a' ready to go to jail, as is right I should. I got the house red up and my bundle made and I'm a'ready to go."

It was fully ten minutes before the young man discarded the blustering and began to plead.

"But my dear woman," he said, "can't you understand that it will be of no advantage to us to have you in jail?"

"It's payin' for 'em," Mrs. Cardigan stolidly insisted, "and it's the only way I can pay."

"But we want *them*, not to be paid for them. Mrs. Harlowe would not have sold them for any conceivable price."

"No," Mrs. Cardigan agreed, "and no more will Eily. I know her well enough for that. Gittins won't get her to part with a one of 'em while she has a bit of strength to her."

"Many of them," continued Mr. Harlowe, "were gifts."

"Think of that now!" Mrs. Cardigan was evidently delighted with the thought of such generosity.

Mr. Harlowe turned to his wife with a gesture of hopelessness.

"Mrs. Cardigan," she coaxed, "don't you think you should have considered my feelings before you sent my baby's things away?"

"Bless your sweet heart, and I did that," responded Mrs. Cardigan, "and I figured that you'd time and money before you. Now Eily, she ain't got neither time nor money. So she'll have the things now, and when your baby comes it'll be havin' just as pretty wait-in', mark my words, and nobody'll be the worse off."

"Except yourself in jail," Mr. Harlowe reminded her. "Jail you know is not pleasant; dark and damp——"

"Perhaps," interrupted Mrs. Harlowe, "we might get the daughter's address from the neighbors?"

"No," interposed Mrs. Cardigan,

"there ain't a soul knows it but myself. I'm a'ready to go to jail," she added, the patience in her voice giving way to a note of weariness.

"Very well," Mr. Harlowe spoke with a sudden decisiveness, "come get into the car and I'll take you to jail."

"Hal!" gasped Mrs. Harlowe.

Mrs. Cardigan went into the house. She returned in an instant with the empty suit case and with a newspaper-wrapped parcel which, she confided, contained her trappings. She locked the door, hid the key on the window's ledge, and followed the others to the car.

From the back seat she leaned forward and spoke chattily.

"You see," she said, "Eily never had nothin' dacent. She never had a dacent dress nor a dacent toy, and she ain't got a dacent husband. So I thought well, she's a goin' to have a dacent baby!"

She paused, surprised at the Harlowes' lack of enthusiasm. She hoped they were not angry with her. She felt very friendly toward them. True, she realized their business transaction had contained an element of unpleasantness, but that was the way with all affairs of business. Always, when she had pawned anything, there had been a certain hostility between her and Mr. Solomon until she had clasped the money in her hand. After that the hostility had always changed into cordiality. This stony attitude was hard to understand.

She leaned back against the cushions and tried to give herself up to the pleasure of her first ride in an automobile; but she was in too exultant and ebullient a mood for silence.

"I'd give a lot," she offered, again leaning forward, "to been a mouse in



"I'm a' ready to go to jail. It's
"and it's

the corner when Eily opened that box. Saints above! she'll think her ma has come into money!"

"And what," questioned Mr. Harlowe, "will she think when she discovers the truth?"

Mrs. Cardigan smiled joyously.

"Sure, if the house rents right off, and I'm thinkin' it will, for there was a lady yisterday who all but said she'd have it, then Mrs. O'Flynn will be sendin' the money regular to Eily."

"We mean," interrupted Mrs. Harlowe, "how will she feel about you being in jail?"

"Oh," Mrs. Cardigan reassured her, "Eily's a sinsible girl; she'll understand



payin' for 'em," Mrs. Cardigan stolidly insisted, the only way I can pay."

we couldn't have the things without payin' for 'em."

Mr. Harlowe stopped the car and pointed to a building of gray stone.

"There," he said impressively, "is the jail."

"Think of that now," extolled Mrs. Cardigan, "such a grand place and all!"

She tried unsuccessfully to open the door of the car.

"The inside of it is not so grand," Mr. Harlowe assured her. "Do you know that in prison——"

The fact that not long since he had read in some detail of the horrors of Leavenworth during the Civil War,

added a forceful vividness which otherwise might have been lacking to his description.

"Well," said Mrs. Cardigan, at his first full pause, "I don't know as it will be so comfortable, but I'm thinkin' I can over it a' right."

Again she attempted to open the door.

"See here"—Mr. Harlowe's manner was distinctly shamefaced—"I'll make you an offer. I'll give you twenty-five dollars and you can send it to your daughter and have her return our things."

"Thankin' you kindly," replied Mrs. Cardigan, "but Gittins 'ud likely git the most of it away from her for drink, and there'd be this and that to pay, and in the end the baby wouldn't be dacent."

"Fifty dollars?" coaxed Mr. Harlowe.

"It's like you said," Mrs. Cardigan responded. "After Eily has got used to the things, money wouldn't buy 'em. It is that kind of you, but for no price I couldn't be so cruel to her. Plaze,"—she spoke as a guest might speak to her hostess who was apologizing for the guest room—"it'll be real nice in the jail, and I'll not be mindin' it at all. So if we could step in now, and see the judge——"

"It is no use, Hal," Mrs. Harlowe whispered and, the next instant, the car was purring on its way.

"And where are we goin'?" inquired Mrs. Cardigan.

"We are going," answered Mr. Har-

lowe, "to take you home. I thought I was calling your bluff, but you have called mine."

"But I ain't wantin' to go home!"

"Nevertheless, that's where you are going."

"But I got to go to the jail!" Mrs. Cardigan protested wildly. "There ain't no other way I can pay for the things. I can't take 'em away from my girl now, a breakin' her heart with the disappointment, and her in such troubles. I wouldn't stole the things at all without I'd knowed I could go to the jail."

"If your conscience troubles you too much," suggested Mr. Harlowe, "you might ease it by returning the baby clothes."

"But I can't! I give 'em away!"

"Never mind," whispered Mrs. Harlowe, "let the poor old thing alone. She's crying. And, of course, there is plenty of time——"

"I'll go to the jail by myself, that I will," declared Mrs. Cardigan. "I'll walk back there this night."

"Unless we proffer charges, which we won't, you'll be sent home again."

"You aren't meanin' that they'll not let me into the jail unless yourselves take me there?"

"Exactly. They'd laugh and send you about your business—that's all."

"Oh, but plaze now," and the most skeptical could not have doubted the sincerity in her voice, "you wouldn't be lavin' an old woman in such a pinch as this! Sure, I can't stand it, that I can't! The last days was that hard, and but for tellin' myself that soon I'd be proper in jail I'd a niver got through 'em. To go back now an' be shamed to hold my head up with the neighbors—— No, plaze, sir, I'd rather be in my grave."

"Mrs. Cardigan," some of the gruffness had left Mr. Harlowe's voice, "what you ask is quite out of the question. But I'll make the offer again of fifty dollars if you will send for the things."

"I can't! Eily has 'em by now, a lovin' each little piece and a plannin' how her baby'll look in 'em. And the baby hisself—the wee thing—no, I can't!"

"Yes, I know," Mr. Harlowe began, but his wife turned to him.

"Do hush," she said, "please!"

Back again on the little porch, Mrs. Cardigan searched for the key on the window's ledge, but the fingers which had been so steady an hour ago trembled as they fumbled with the key.

She pushed open the door and stepped into the room. The shawl slipped from her sagging shoulders and fell to the floor. She shivered and raised a heavy, work-gnarled hand to her throat.

"If I'd 'a' knowed," she said, pressing her throat with her fingers and turning her head from side to side, "if I'd 'a' only knowed!"

Her eyes sought the bundle that she had placed on the bare table. Slowly she unwrapped it, took out a tablet of paper and a stub of pencil, and stood turning them over in her hands.

"I got to!" she murmured. "I didn't want 'em this bad. It ain't worth it!"

She drew a chair to the table, 'sat down, and began to write, her fingers clutching the pencil, her lips forming each letter as she wrote it: "Deer Eily, them babby close I cent you——"

The pencil dropped from her fingers. She crumpled the sheet of paper in her hands, and tossed it from her.

"It ain't Eily's fault," she spoke aloud in a new, hard voice, "and it ain't the baby's! They didn't steal the things. *You* stole 'em! And now you can't back out of it. You got to stand it, best you can—that's all!"

Rising quickly, she went to the window, tore away the newspaper covering, reached for the card which read: "House for Rent. Call Next Door," reversed it, and replaced it in the window, so that passers-by might read again: "Washing Done Here."

New York Stage Successes

"Smilin' Through"

By Allan Langdon Martin

The Beautiful Fantasy in which Jane Cowl is Starring, Playing the Roles of Both Kathleen Dungannon and Moonyeen Clare.

THROUGH a wicket gate, which may be just at the borderland between this world and the world of the Spirit, the ghosts of two mothers peer down into a garden of brilliant sunshine and flowers. Mary Clare is a sweet, calm, Irish ghost, young and beautiful, while Sarah Wayne gives the impression of middle age, and there is in her voice something of a troubled, human quality, but that is because she has only recently died and hasn't learned as much as Mary.

SARAH (*looking through the wicket*): It's hard to forgive him for the way he feels about my boy.

MARY: He'll grow out of it in time.

SARAH: I wish I could see as clearly as you. I can only feel that he hates him—as he hated his father before him. It's fifty years since that hate was born, and it's still strong—so strong!

MARY: Ah, he is bitter, I know! But he has a heart of gold. You see, I knew him well when I was alive. That was when he was a young man. He's taken such care of my girl, ever since she was five! Oh, I hated to go—and leave her! She's the greatest darling—is my Kathleen! Of course, I'm her mother, but she is the dearest—

SARAH (*with gentle pride*): No dearer



Miss Cowl as the lovely Moonyeen Clare of fifty years ago.

than my boy! We mothers always think that, I know. But you see I lived long enough to see my Kenneth as a man. He's wonderful!

MARY: And how they love each other! If only we could make John see that they belong together! I've tried so often!

SARAH: Couldn't we ask for help—from the woman he loved? He hears *her*, doesn't he, sometimes?

MARY: Yes, very often, since she died. Only, when his heart is full of hate, she can't get through to him any better than we can, though she tries and tries.

SARAH: He looks such a kind old man.

MARY: He is—at heart. He just hasn't learned how to vanquish hate. It takes them so long to learn that. Their little human

By Courtesy of The Selwyns, Producers.



Dr. Owen Harding
(Ethelbert D. Hales)

Ellen
(Charlotte Granville)

John Carteret
(Henry Stephenson)

ELLEN: I don't wonder he goes to sleep—playing the same game for fifty years! Miss Kathleen's always telling him he should take a nap of an afternoon, instead of the dominoes.

OWEN: Don't worry. He takes it!

worries and troubles and sorrows are so real to them.

SARAH (*smiling*): I can remember how real mine seemed to me.

MARY: So do children's sorrows seem real when they lose their marbles, or break their toys. If only these poor grown-up children could learn that their marbles cannot be lost, nor their toys broken!

Suddenly the scene shifts to the garden itself—the lovely English garden of John Carteret's beautiful old house. John and his lifelong friend and neighbor, Doctor Owen Harding—both splendid specimens of charming, vigorous old men—are seated at a table playing dominoes. For fifty years they have enjoyed the friendly quarrels and bickerings the game has engendered. It is John who most frequently retards the game with his dozing.

OWEN (*disgustedly*): If you weren't

asleep, why didn't you play the double six there, where I expected you to?

JOHN: I wasn't asleep, Owen. And you ought to know I never do what anybody expects me to. Now you go to the bone-yard, good doctor.

OWEN (*muttering to himself*): Funny how an otherwise upright man can be so low-down about games. (*Draws and plays.*) What time are we expected at Sam's whist party, do you know?

JOHN: Half past eight. But I'm not going. (*Looking up at the sky*) There's going to be a moon to-night. I couldn't go away when it's going to be moonlight!

OWEN (*irritably*): Mean to say you're going to stay at home and get that damned wooden play toy (*indicating the gay little figure of a marionette in a shrine-like niche of the wall*) out of its ridiculous doll's house and try to conjure up—spooks with it? You're old enough to know better. Don't you know what people think?

JOHN (*laughing*): Think I'm "touched" a little, do they, Owen?

OWEN: This playing with the supernatural—

JOHN (*simply*): There's nothing supernatural about it. It's beautifully natural!

After a little, mention of the name of Kenneth Wayne sends John into a rage, particularly when Owen suggests that Kenneth may be interested in John's adored niece, Kathleen.

JOHN (*angrily*): Damn it, Owen! I don't want to hear any more about Jeremiah Wayne or his wife or his son. As far as this household is concerned, Kenneth Wayne might be dead and buried with his father in America, for all it matters! It's a subject I finished with fifty years ago.

OWEN (*significantly*): The subject may be reopened in spite of you, John.

JOHN: Kathleen knows I don't like him or his name. She'll never disobey me.

OWEN: Fifty years is a long time to hold a hatred, and if you could find it in your heart to be a little kindlier toward young Wayne— The boy is lonely. People around here can't forget what his father did. But he doesn't know what it's all about. He's proud. He feels it.

JOHN: Humph! If he feels anything besides arrogance and egotism, he's the first Wayne— Damn it! I don't want to talk about it any more! (*As he stamps angrily up and down, ELLEN, the housekeeper, enters, looking for her garden basket. It is discovered in the Delphinium bed.*)

ELLEN: Well, who could have put it there?

JOHN (*roaring*): I did—woman—I—me! (*Savagely*) What of it—hey?

ELLEN: Nothing at all, sir—it doesn't matter, I'm sure—

JOHN: Whose garden basket is it, I should like to know? Yes, and if it comes to that, whose Delphiniums? I can ruin 'em if I like, I hope! Who's the head of this house?

ELLEN: You are, sir.

JOHN: Does anybody in this house presume to disregard my orders?

ELLEN: No, sir—nobody but Miss Kathleen, of course, sir.

OWEN (*in triumph*): Oh! Then Miss Kathleen isn't always obedient, Ellen?

ELLEN (*smiling*): Well, no, sir, but then, you see—she's Irish! And then, too, sir, she's twenty—and it's a lovely, willful time of life, isn't it?

John's temper is destined to rise to a still higher temperature. He discovers Owen attempting to pass a note to Ellen, and immediately suspects that it is for Kathleen—and from Kenneth Wayne. He demands its surrender.



WILLIE AINLEY (Philip Tonge): It's no small thing for a man to ask a girl to marry him nowadays. Shows he has a hopeful disposition—and no little courage.

KATHLEEN (Jane Cowli): Oh, it's a wise man you are, Willie, and full of the understanding of women.



KENNETH (Orme Caldara): You've a perfect right to dismiss me, sir. It's your garden. But—please don't think me disrespectful—surely Kathleen has some rights. The choice of her friends—

OWEN: No, John, it isn't your property. (*Tears the note into pieces.*) I'm sorry, John. Perhaps I've done wrong to conceal anything from you, but you're such a hot-tempered old ass! And I feel you're absolutely in the wrong. I don't say that note was from Kenneth Wayne, but if it was, and the girl were fond of him, who are you or I to say her heart isn't telling her what's best? Her young life is just budding—and the lad is fine—

JOHN (*shaking with suppressed emotion*): He's the son of the man who was responsible for the greatest sorrow I ever felt, and you know it! He's his son—his own son—the same stock—the same— In this very garden fifty years ago—you were here—you saw her little white face—and you've seen me live on here for fifty years—without her! And you dare—dare—to carry

notes from his son to my Kathleen! No, don't speak to me—I can't bear it! There won't be any dominoes to-morrow, doctor.

OWEN (*brokenly*): Don't be an obstinate old fool—

JOHN (*his voice choking*): I'm an old fool, I grant you that. Good night. (*Exits just as KATHLEEN comes bounding in.*)

KATHLEEN: What's ailing you at all, Doctor Owen? And you without a smile on the face that never lacked a smile for me before! Are ye cross with me? Sure, I know I deserve it at times, but *only* at times. What is it, then—bad news?

OWEN: I've had a serious quarrel with your uncle.

KATHLEEN: Oh, faith! That happens every day and twice on Sundays. It means nothing. Come in, now, and make peace.

OWEN: No, dear. He as good as told me *not* to come here again. I know when I'm not wanted, I hope.

KATHLEEN: Well now, if you two aren't a pair of babies, then I'm ninety, and that's the truth! Sure, I can't leave you alone together five minutes but you're at each other's throats. Is it the dominoes?

OWEN: No, it's you—and Ken. I had another note that Ken asked me to bring, and I tried to slip it to Ellen, and he caught me.

KATHLEEN: Oh, glory be! Did he read it? Where is it? (*Shaking her head ruefully at the scraps OWEN holds out*) Well, it's no great matter. They all say the same thing. I could read it with my eyes shut. Was uncle very mad? (*OWEN nods emphatically.*) Doctor Owen, what is it about Ken? Why should he hate him when the lad never harmed him?

OWEN: Well, I—I expect John will explain it when he thinks you ought to know.

KATHLEEN: Well, I know this much: it's something to do with Kenneth's father and uncle John's sweetheart—my aunt Moonyeen—years and years gone by. Ah, it's a queer world surely! Somebody's always loving somebody they've no right to love, and as soon as they tell you ye can't have somebody, that's the somebody you have to have, isn't it so? It's a damned nuisance, this love business! If it was Willie Ainley, now, I was getting notes from, uncle John would

KATHLEEN: Oh, doctor dear, I needed no encouragement. Do you have to encourage the sun to shine? It just comes out and bathes us all in warmth and sweetness, and things just come to blossom in it. Well, who'd have thought I had *that* in me?

OWEN: It's like that with you, is it?

KATHLEEN: Yes, only worse.

OWEN: Does Ken feel the same way?

KATHLEEN: Well, he gives a pretty good imitation of it, only I think he's tongue-tied. (*Noticing that OWEN has taken the marionette from the niche*) Oh, doctor dear, you



JOHN: My dear, fifty years ago, on the eighteenth of June, this old house was in a hubbub of excitement. It was a lovely summer night—the night Moonyeen and I were to be married.

sing an entirely different song. Were you ever proposed to, doctor dear?

OWEN (*smiling*): Unhappily for me—no.

KATHLEEN: Well, I was. Ten minutes ago.

OWEN: Ainley? What did he say?

KATHLEEN: What *didn't* he say?

OWEN: Willie's a nice boy.

KATHLEEN: He is that, and a good match, and worth a lot of money? But I'd laugh myself to death married to Willie.

OWEN: I'm afraid I've done wrong to encourage you about Ken Wayne.

ought never to touch *that*! That's the first thing I learned when I came here: never to touch the minuet lady.

OWEN: It—it isn't sensible—his feeling about that toy—and moonlight nights and—her coming to him all the time. I've a good mind to smash the thing.

KATHLEEN (*with a little shiver*): If you knew what goes on in this garden sometimes of a night! He sits there at the table, and when the moonlight comes round to that gate, he takes the wee lady here—I've seen

him from my window—and holds her up in the moonbeams until her shadow falls on the gate. I don't know what happens then—I'm terrified to look—but it's unearthly.

Later on, Kathleen is alone in the garden when Willie Ainley comes to continue his proposal.

WILLIE: I'm a solid, substantial kind of a man. You could always depend upon my being just like I am now. I won't ever change—

KATHLEEN: I'm sure of that, Willie!

WILLIE: That should mean something to a woman. Most men nowadays need a lot of *keeping* as well as catching.

KATHLEEN: And then, again, there are some men you can't get *rid of*.

WILLIE: In my opinion, when a man takes a wife these days, he's running risks. Women have such an uncertain way of changing their minds about you *after* you've married them, just when you begin to think you've got them tied down for life. It's no small thing for a man to ask a girl to marry him nowadays. Shows he has a hopeful disposition—and no little courage.

KATHLEEN: Oh, it's a wise man you are, Willie, and full of the understanding of women.

WILLIE (*hastily*): Oh, not that I mean you're like that! You're the sensiblest girl I know. If you are a bit fractious, it's only because you've had no hand to guide you. You're just like my little brown Betty. Everybody said she'd always be a tricky, bad-tempered little vixen; but now that I've broken her, she's as gentle as a lamb!

KATHLEEN: Well, I like being the tricky, bad-tempered vixen I am. It's no use, Willie, I don't want to marry you, and you'll just have to take my word for it.

WILLIE (*gloomily*): Well, I'm sorry. Must say I think you are making a mistake. (KENNETH WAYNE *enters gayly*.) 'Lo, Wayne. Kathleen, will you excuse me? If you want to change your mind about what I was saying—(KATHLEEN *is smiling at KENNETH and doesn't answer*.) Well—cheerio! (*Savings over the wall and disappears*.)

Delighted lovers' greetings, whispered cautions, gay raillery—and then Kenneth tells Kathleen that he is going away and has come to say good-by.

KENNETH: I'm leaving for Salisbury to sign up. I'm going to *fight*, Kathleen.

KATHLEEN: Oh, the war, is it? Sure, I thought for a minute you were goin' to get married or something—

KENNETH (*laughing*): Nothing like that! I wouldn't ask any girl to marry me, and then go away and leave her. Too risky. I might come back all shot up—might even not come back at all. It wouldn't be fair to any girl.

KATHLEEN (*softly*): I wasn't thinkin' of—any girl.

KENNETH: But I can tell you *this*: if I did mean to get married, I wouldn't be going away to do it. Dunstable would be good enough for me.

KATHLEEN (*demurely*): You don't tell me!

KENNETH: I don't *have* to tell you. There's only one girl for me—when the time comes.

KATHLEEN: "When the time comes?" You're no great believer in makin' hay while the sun shines, are you, Kenneth? I have a bit of news for you. Somebody wants to marry me!

KENNETH (*smiling*): That's no news.

KATHLEEN: I'm maybe goin' to say "yes."

KENNETH (*teasingly*): Why don't you wait till you're *asked*?

KATHLEEN: I was asked, about half an hour ago.

KENNETH (*his tone changing, jealous at once*): Somebody's proposed to you?

KATHLEEN: Well, you might call it a proposal. It wasn't my idea of a proposal—

KENNETH: Who was it? Bert Henley?

KATHLEEN: No; he's going to, but he hasn't yet. My idea of a proposal—

KENNETH (*with set jaws*): Are you going to tell me who it was?

KATHLEEN: Are you going to listen to what my idea of a proposal is? It might come in handy to you some day.

KENNETH: You darling! Do you mean—

KATHLEEN (*oblivious*): The young man must first ascertain that his intentions are not entirely disagreeable to me. You're making a note of this now? And then, choosing a suitable place—say a garden, or some place like that—and then a suitable time— Well, around this time is as good as any other.

KENNETH: Yes—go on.

KATHLEEN: He should say: "It has long been my intention to ask a question of ye." Then, when I have said, "Dear me, how interesting! What *can* it be?" he should gently take my hand and say in a tone which trembles with the force of his feeling, "Miss Dungannon—Kathleen—may I call you Kathleen?" That's how a proper proposal should start. I read it in a book.

KENNETH: Now, then, see if I have it right. The garden's right. So's the time of day. How does it begin? "It has long been my intention"— (JOHN *appears on steps*.)



Miss Cowl as *Moonyeen Clare* and Henry Stephenson as *John Carteret*.

KATHLEEN: Go on, go on. You're getting on fine! (*Sees her uncle*) Oh, blessed saints! Here's uncle John! (*Confused*) Oh, hello, uncle John—we—Kenneth Wayne is here—he only came in for a minute—and he's going in a minute—

Poor Kathleen is sent into the house in disgrace, and Kenneth is dismissed.

KENNETH: You've a perfect right to dismiss me, sir. It's your garden. But—please

don't think me disrespectful—surely Kathleen has *some* rights—

JOHN: While Kathleen is under my roof I choose her friends. I am sorry to be inhospitable, but you will please understand clearly that you are not welcome here.

KENNETH: Mr. Carteret, I really don't deserve the treatment I get from you. Your aversion to me is unreasonable, sir. You have nursed a prejudice against me that has no foundation.



MARY CLARE (Elaine Inescort): Moonycen wanted to be alone for a little while. I'm going to her now. Would you care to send her any message?

JOHN: I'd like to, if you think the news wouldn't surprise her too much. Tell her I've just discovered how much I love her!

JOHN (*bitterly*): You are a Wayne. That's its foundation.

KENNETH (*hotly*): If you will forgive me, sir, that is manifestly unfair. You are holding a grudge against me for some injustice my father did you. I don't pretend to know the facts, but I did know my father. And I know he was considered a man of honor.

JOHN (*grimly*): I hope you may always continue to think so.

KENNETH: I resent that, sir. You are speaking of a man who is dead. Just because I happen to be the son of a man with whom you disagreed—

JOHN (*sharply*): You speak very lightly of the "disagreement" between your father and me. You do not know the facts?

KENNETH: I have heard vague hints. Now, I want to know the facts.

JOHN: Your mother did not enlighten you before she died?

KENNETH: She did not, sir. She was very unhappy during her stay in England, but I never knew why.

JOHN: It is not fair to disclose a secret she tried so hard to keep. (*He turns to go.*)

KENNETH: Just a moment, sir! I hate to beg—but I'm joining the army to-morrow, and this is my last chance. I take the same risk as other chaps. It is quite possible I may be killed. Mayn't I say good-by to Kathleen—just say good-by to her?

JOHN: You may not—with my permission.

KENNETH (*flaring out*): Then it's only fair to tell you, sir, that I shall say good-by to her without it. I love Kathleen and she loves me. You're going to find it difficult to keep us apart.

JOHN: I shall do my best.

KENNETH (*passionately*): Then let me advise you, sir, *not* to count on my being killed, for I'm coming back, Mr. Carteret—war or no war—and Kathleen and I are going to be married—with your consent or without it! (*He rushes out.*)

After a little, Kathleen comes back. John turns and looks at her as she stands weeping at the gate.

JOHN (*his voice choked with tenderness*): Kathleen, my dear, don't you love me?

Can't you trust me? I've taken care of you since you were a little girl.

KATHLEEN: I love ye, uncle dear, but I love Ken, too. I'm a woman now, and my heart's breaking.

JOHN: Time will heal that.

KATHLEEN: Has it healed yours? Aren't you still holding a grudge that doesn't heal against Ken's father? Aren't you still cherishing a love that doesn't heal? Has time cured your heartbreak?

JOHN (after a pause): Kathleen, it's time you knew the truth. Come here. (She kneels beside him.) My dear, fifty years ago, on the eighteenth of June, this old house was in a hubbub of excitement. It was a lovely summer night—the garden in bloom, much as it is now. It was the night Moonyeen and I were to be married. She

had arrived that day with her sister Mary—your mother, my dear. I had a sentimental wish to be married from the home of my father, and my father's father, and Moonyeen indulged me in it. As the long twilight faded into darkness the old house was lit by a thousand candles—(The curtain falls to rise upon a scene of enchantment. The flower-filled garden is softly lighted with gay lanterns. Snatches of laughter and bits of bantering chatter are heard. Several young people, in the costume of fifty years ago, are adding the finishing touches to the decorations. Then comes the beautiful, rippling sound of a harp. Some one is playing MOONYEEN'S favorite song, "Smilin' Through.")

MARY CLARE and ELLEN, distraught by the nonarrival of

the wedding cake, flutter about, attending to the last little things, and attempting to calm the nervous best man, OWEN HARDING. Presently JOHN enters. Noticing his friend's downcast face, he crosses to him.)

JOHN: I know what you're feeling over this, old friend, but no one can take your place. You know that. There'll be three of us instead of two—that's all.

OWEN: My life's a small matter—but I just want you to know that I'd give it, gladly, for either of you—

JOHN (blinking): Don't you suppose I know that, you blithering idiot?

OWEN: That's right. And now, John, I've something to tell you. I ran into The Dragon on my way here. Wayne was there, drinking more than was good for him, and talking about—her.



MOONYEEN: Ah, Jerry, it was nice of ye to come round. I knew ye'd never let me get married without wishin' me well.



JOHN: Look here, you little villain, is this according to the rules? I'm not supposed to see you like this till we meet at the altar.

JOHN: Damned scoundrel! (*Starts toward the gate. OWEN restrains him.*)

OWEN: You can't do anything about it now. Only I think you ought to be on your guard. He's not been asked to the wedding. I'm wondering if that was wise. Oh, I know how you feel about him! No man has a right to make threats just because he is refused by a woman. But Wayne's is a strange, bitter nature, and I think he resents being discriminated against. At any rate, he was making some vague threats that "there was still time," "the wedding wasn't over yet," and so on. At first I thought I wouldn't tell you—

JOHN: I'm glad you did. If it becomes necessary, I'll deal with him—but that kind of man usually takes it out in talking. (*The gate bell clangs violently.*) Somebody else arriving. Come into my study and we'll talk it over. (*They go into the house.*)

ELLEN (*opening the garden door*): Lord love us! Here's the cake at last! (*Startled*) Why, it's Mr. Wayne! I thought you were the wedding cake!

WAYNE (*swaying slightly*): I'm no part of this wedding, it would appear.

ELLEN: What is it you want, sir? We're very busy just now.

WAYNE: First, I want to come in! (*Brushes past her, with a laugh.*) No place for the rejected suitor amidst the wedding guests! His great crime was that he loved the lady, and the lady didn't love him.

ELLEN (*distressed*): You've—you've been drinking, Mr. Wayne. I do hope you'll go quietly away and not make any disturbance.

WAYNE: Take this note to her. I'll wait.

ELLEN: She's dressing—and I don't think she wants to hear from you. (*More bravely*) No, sir, I will not! There mustn't anything happen to-night of all nights—

WAYNE: Do as I tell you! I want that message taken to her before the wedding. Understand? She *must* read it! She must! (*MARY CLARE enters.*) My respects, Miss Mary. You've always been so kind—so *fair* to me. Will you have the goodness to deliver this note to your sister?

MARY: Jeremiah Wayne, you had no right to come here! It's not Moonyeen's fault if she doesn't love you. Why can't you take your dismissal like a *man*? And not come round to distress her like this?

WAYNE: If you'll take that note to her, and let me wait for an answer, I'll go quietly. If *not*, I'll stay and watch the wedding like a welcome guest—only I don't vouch for what I'll say or do. Which will you have?

MARY (*after a pause*): I'll take it. But I don't like this, Mr. Wayne. Wait here. (*To ELLEN*) Go in and try to keep Mr. Carteret from coming out. (*Both exit.*) WAYNE drops into a chair, his head in his hands. After a little, MOONYEEN, in her wedding gown, appears in the doorway.)

MOONYEEN (*very softly, as she comes down the steps*): Ah, Jerry, it was nice of ye to come round! I knew ye'd never let me get married without wishin' me well. (*He falls*

on his knees at her feet, burying his head in the folds of her skirt.) Jerry—Jerry!

WAYNE: You're not going to marry him—it isn't true—tell me it isn't true!

MOONYEEN: Oh, you mustn't begin all this over again!

WAYNE (*springing to his feet*): I won't let you! He shan't have you! I've as much to offer as he has—I was a fool to give you up without a fight! But it's not too late! You must come away with me—now!

MOONYEEN: Jerry! Jerry!

for me? You're going to leave me now—bravely, and wishing me joy—and you're going along home, and let me be married to the man I love—*because* you love me. You must. You *will*! Look up now, and tell me that you want me to be happy, even though it means unhappiness for you.

WAYNE: I can bear it when I'm with you, Moonyeen. It's when I'm alone—

MOONYEEN: When you're alone, say over and over to yourself "I'm doing it for her." Then it will all come right. Will you try?



MOONYEEN: I know a better pretend. Let's pretend it's that beautiful day when first we met!

WAYNE: Don't look at me like that—as if you hated me. I love you—it's killing me! For God's sake, Moonyeen—I can't stand it! I know I'm behaving like a crazy man—and that's what I am—crazy—crazy with love and jealousy. The thought of your belonging to another man drives me mad. I can't think. I must stop it somehow!

MOONYEEN (*gently*): How much do you love me, Jerry?

WAYNE (*passionately*): More than all the world—more than life itself! I can't give you up to him—

MOONYEEN: Listen to me. Do you know what you are going to do to prove your love

WAYNE (*nodding*): I'll try.

MOONYEEN (*gently leading him toward the gate*): That's it! Sure, it's a dog's life I'd be leading you, Jerry, not loving you—and you don't deserve that! You must go now. Wish me well, and *mean* it! (*The touch of her hand turns him to fire. He clasps her in his arms, kissing her hungrily, violently, like a madman. Then, throwing her off, he runs through the gate and disappears. MOONYEEN sways dazedly against the gate. JOHN comes out on the steps, calling her.*)

JOHN: Are you out here, Moonyeen? (*At sight of her in her wedding dress he draws a long breath of utter joy and bewilder-*

ment.) Oh—my lovely—my pink rose! (*In his arms, she begins to shake with crying. He caresses her soothingly.*) Tears? I know. It has all been too much for you.

MOONYEEN: Hold me tight! I'm safe in your arms.

JOHN (*very softly*): Love is all around you. (*She stops crying and smiles up at him.*) Look here, you little villain, is this according to the rules? I'm not supposed to see you like this till we meet at the altar. You look too wonderful! When you turned

around to me, with the silver light bathing you, you looked like a little white ghost coming down a moonbeam to greet me.

MOONYEEN: I'm no ghost, John. I'm real, but I'll love you till I *am* one, and after! (*Smiling through her tears*) I'm so happy I can't keep from crying. (*Then demurely*) It's customary for the bridegroom to make some slight mention of the fact that he isn't altogether wretched.

JOHN: *Wretched!* I'm so happy I'm afraid to tell any one for fear it won't last!



WAYNE: I never meant *that!* My God, I never meant that!



MOONYEEN: Love like this—cannot die. I'll find a way—to come back—just you wait—and see—

(Kissing her hands, he leads her to the bench.) Let's—let's pretend I haven't asked you to marry me—and you haven't accepted—and let's do it all over again.

MOONYEEN (laughing): Let's pretend it's that beautiful day when first we met.

JOHN: Wasn't it beautiful? And weren't you the glorious little flirt, and didn't I fall in love with you before I'd any more than laid eyes on you? I looked at you and my heart stopped beating, and I said to myself: "What a wonderful girl! Out of all the world she's the one for me. I'm done for!" What did you think?

MOONYEEN: I thought: "What an overbearing, arrogant young man! I don't think much of him!"

JOHN (firmly): I'm going straight into the house and stop the wedding!

MOONYEEN: Oh, John, don't! I take it back. I thought—I don't know what I thought. I only know that my eyes looked into yours and found a home there. And I knew that you were the one for me. I was done for! And here we are!

JOHN (drawing her to him): And nothing shall ever part us—promise me!

MOONYEEN (passionately): Not even death

itself! Because if I should die, John, I'd be so lonely for you I'd come back to you.

JOHN: My love! (He slowly kisses her. The gate opens and WAYNE bursts in.)

JOHN: If you've come to create a disturbance at the wedding—

WAYNE (thickly): There isn't going to be any wedding!

JOHN: Threats like that won't do you any good. But if you try to cloud Moonyeen's happiness to-night, I'll settle with you afterward! Leave the place!

WAYNE: You'll settle with me now! I wasn't able to keep you from winning her—but, by Heaven, I can keep you from marrying her! (He aims a pistol at JOHN.)

MOONYEEN: No! No! (The bullet strikes MOONYEEN. She sinks to the floor.)

JOHN (in horror): Moonyeen!

WAYNE: I never meant that! My God, I never meant that! (He leaps over the wall as OWEN and the others come rushing in.)

JOHN (holding MOONYEEN's crumpled body): Oh, my darling, my pink rose, try with all your strength to help me save you!

MOONYEEN (weakly): Too late. I know! It's a pity, isn't it? I said—not even death itself— That's funny, when you think of it—like a warning—

JOHN: Moonyeen, don't leave me!

MOONYEEN: Never fear. Love like this—cannot die. I'll find a way—to come back—just you wait and see! John—my John—I love you. "There's a little green gate—at whose trellis I wait—while two eyes so true come smilin' through." I'll be there—waiting—just at the end of the road—

The scene gradually fades out and the garden of to-day is revealed once more. Kathleen still kneels beside her

sitting here, with this foolish little toy of hers, and the moonlight struck the shadow of it on the gate. And suddenly I heard the words of her little song, "Two eyes so true come smilin' through at me," and next I heard her little laugh. After that the gate opened slowly—slowly—and there in the gateway she stood—with her eyes so true—and they were "smilin' through" at me.

KATHLEEN (*rising*): Uncle dear, if you could love like that, how is it ye can be so



KATHLEEN: Uncle dear, if you could love like that—through the years—and after death itself, how is it ye can be so hard about me and my poor little love story? How can ye?

uncle, who sits with his eyes covered with a trembling hand.

JOHN: Love like that, Kathleen, is the smile of God. Often she has come to me, sometimes every moonlit night—sometimes with long, lonely times between. But always when I needed her, she was beside me. And the comfort of it was so great that it made little difference whether I lived one year after her or a hundred, if only she was with me now and then. At first I thought I couldn't bear it. And then one night I was

hard about me and my poor little love story? How can ye?

JOHN (*passionately*): Because you're the stock of my Moonyeen herself, and his is the blood of the Waynes. You must forget him, and make an end of this!

KATHLEEN: Well, then, uncle John, though I love ye and respect ye, I just *won't*! You talk of love bein' like the smile of God. You're not the only one God smiles upon. He's smiled on *me*, too, and on Ken. Sure, it's not the lad's fault what his father did!



MOONYEEN: I know you want me—John, my John—and I'm here. But you'll have to sweep out all the cobwebs of revenge and hatred from your thoughts before we two can talk together.

You're an obstinate old man, John Carteret, and if it wasn't that I don't believe that she's ever come to you at all, except in your own dreams and fancies, I'd have it in my heart to wish that she'd never come again! (KENNETH'S whistle is heard. KATHLEEN starts.)

JOHN: Kathleen! I forbid it!

KATHLEEN: He's going to war—I may never see him again! I'm going to say good-

by to him! (She rushes out. JOHN goes miserably to the marionette and picks it up. The shadow appears on the gate. He waits, but MOONYEEN does not appear.)

JOHN (in a heartbroken cry): Moonyeen! (There is no answer.) She doesn't come to me—my pink rose—(He sinks into a chair, broken in spirit. At the gate MOONYEEN enters, but he doesn't see her.)

MOONYEEN (*in a voice like distant music, which he is unable to hear*): Oh, John, John! Is it so hard to learn the lessons of love? You'll never be able to see me while you've hate in your heart! I know you want me, John, my John, and I'm here. But you'll have to sweep out all the cobwebs of revenge and hatred from your thoughts before we two can talk together. Love of me is not enough. Love must shine all around.

Four years later, a paler, graver Kathleen waits day by day for the postman and a letter from her lover that



KENNETH: Will you marry me soon? Next month?

KATHLEEN: What's the matter with—to-morrow?

does not come. The great war is over, and Kenneth, badly wounded, has been in a London hospital. His letters have been fewer of late, and Kathleen is try-



ing desperately to assure herself that his heart has not changed.

Unable to endure Doctor Owen's sympathetic espousal of the lovers' cause, John has banished his old friend from his life. Obstinate still, his heart filled with bitterness, he has grown older, sadder, more feeble, but the old temper flashes out as frequently as ever. Moonyeen comes to him no more, and the marionette has been put away.

Then one day, Doctor Owen, as if his courage has been raised to the deed, opens the gate and enters the garden. Kenneth Wayne is back—at Doctor Owen's house—obsessed with one great desire: to see John Carteret.

OWEN: Where do you stand?

JOHN: Where I stood four years ago!

OWEN: I was afraid so. But whether you like it or not, that four years has taken something away from all of us which nothing can give back. And from Kenneth Wayne it has taken the greatest thing of all—hope. He's come back a very different man from the one who went away, both in body and in mind. He's been having a pretty rocky time, John. You must see him!

JOHN: I tell you, I won't see him!

OWEN: John, I warn you—my back is up! Listen to this letter. It's from his surgeon. (*Reading*) "His wound has caused a limp which will be with him always. His greatest trouble now is depression. Like most shell-shock victims, he believes he is a big, useless

wreckage. He was never known to shirk a duty—and for four years he has been through concentrated hell." John, you can't be hard on a man like that!

JOHN: I won't see him! We have nothing to say to one another! *(The gate opens and KENNETH, leaning on a cane, stands inside.)*

KENNETH *(with quiet dignity and respect)*: Excuse me, sir, I couldn't help hearing what you said, and I wouldn't force myself upon you if it weren't necessary. It's all right, doctor. Mr. Carteret has every right to feel bitterly toward me—and I—I don't blame him. But when he has heard what I have to say, I think he'll be glad I came. *(OWEN leaves them alone.)* Kathleen's last letter—I couldn't answer it. I decided to come. It didn't seem quite so cowardly.

JOHN: I'm glad you can describe so accurately your continued pursuit of my niece.

KENNETH: I'm not pursuing your niece. I'm running away from her, really—

JOHN: That is what you came to say?

KENNETH: Yes, sir. I'd rather not see Kathleen if you will explain things to her. I hope I'm not altogether without courage, but—*(He turns away to hide his suffering)*—it will be better if I don't see her.

JOHN *(grimly)*: You can hardly expect me to contradict that statement. *(Less harshly)* Going to be all right again soon.

KENNETH: I don't know; that's just the trouble. That's what you must tell Kathleen, Make her understand that I've nothing to compensate her for all she would lose. Tell her I'm not the same man who left her four years ago—that I don't feel as I did. I thought she might guess that from my few letters, but she's too constant herself to suspect me of changing.

JOHN: You mean that you no longer wish to marry Kathleen?

KENNETH *(hotly)*: I have no right to marry any woman! I'm glad that you refused to let Kathleen marry me. I'd only be a miserable burden to her now.

JOHN: That possibility had nothing to do with my refusal.

KENNETH: I know. But sometimes a mistaken motive works for good in the end. Oh, I'm not blaming you for your refusal—not any more. You would be something more than human if you could forgive my father's crime. Doctor Harding has told me the whole story, and so it's better as it is. She'll realize that, too, some day. *(KATHLEEN enters. She stands dazed for a moment.)*

KENNETH: How are you, Kathleen?

KATHLEEN *(holding out her hands)*: Ken! Oh, Ken! You're back! I think I'm going to faint—no, I'm not—I'm going to cry!

KENNETH: Oh, come, Kathleen, I'm not worth a single tear. *(She laughs and cries, happily.)* Awfully jolly to see you, though. You're looking very fit.

KATHLEEN: Am I? Oh, Ken, you've come back! And you're alive! Just let me look at you! If I could stop crying for a single second, I could see you better.

KENNETH *(trying to be light)*: Not much to look at, I'm afraid.

KATHLEEN: You've come back! Aren't you glad to see me? You haven't said so, you know. When I look at you, these four awful years seem like nothing at all. It seems as if it were only yesterday you went away. Remember when you tried to send me that last note, and uncle John found out?

KENNETH *(settling his teeth)*: Yes, weren't we funny kids? But I suppose all youngsters go through that youthful love phase.

KATHLEEN *(smiling)*: They do say youthful love makes the best marriage—

KENNETH: Do they?

KATHLEEN: And it stands to reason if you've loved somebody all your youth you're not going to stop all of a sudden—when you're older—are you? *(He doesn't answer. She goes bravely on.)* Now, if I cared for somebody, I'd want to be married while I was young. I wouldn't want to wait a minute longer than was necessary, would you?

KENNETH: That depends, Kathleen. *(Rising)* I shouldn't have come here.

KATHLEEN: Shouldn't have come?

KENNETH: No, I'll go away. I've made all my plans. You'll forget me. I was hoping you—didn't care any more.

KATHLEEN: Don't you—care—any more?

KENNETH: Oh, I've no right!

KATHLEEN *(snatching at straws)*: It's because you're afraid you'll never be any better, isn't it? My, but you had me scared for a minute! And do you really think that would make any difference to me? I love you, Ken—just as I always have—just as I always will. It's splendid of you to want to release me, but I—I just won't be released, dear. I'd love you if you were in pieces.

KENNETH: Kathleen, you must believe that my deep and undying friendship is all that I can offer you—now or ever. Things have changed. I thought you'd understand.

KATHLEEN: No. Ye see, I trusted in your love. But four years is a long time. A man can change a lot in four years. He can even find himself loving somebody else, can't he?

KENNETH: You mustn't believe that!

KATHLEEN: Oh, what does it matter? "Things have changed!" Oh, a silly fool I've been—and that conceited! *(She tries*

to laugh.) I didn't mean to throw myself at your head, Ken—it's too silly—too stupid.

KENNETH (in agony): Kathleen—

KATHLEEN: Would you mind if I asked you to go? Good-by—and please forget what I said. (KATHLEEN is sobbing hysterically when JOHN enters.)

JOHN (brokenly): Kathleen—my little girl—don't cry like that—don't—

KATHLEEN: Oh, you've kept us apart because you're cruel and selfish and stubborn, and now he doesn't want me any more! You've taken him away from me just as surely as Jeremiah Wayne took your Moonyeen Clare! And my heart's just as bitter and just as lonely! I'm going now, uncle, for good, and I'm never coming back as long as I live! (She stumbles into the house, crying hysterically. JOHN is deeply moved. Presently he goes to the gate and calls OWEN, to whom—not without difficulty—he apologizes.)

OWEN: John! Oh, John, you dear old donkey! (They embrace, both close to tears.)

JOHN: Why, it wasn't half so hard as I expected! In fact, it was so easy I want to do it again. Where is that boy?

OWEN: I'll get him! (Rushes out.)

JOHN (as they return): Come in, my boy. I'm not very eloquent in the matter of apologies, but— Kenneth, son of Jeremiah Wayne, I ask your pardon.

OWEN: And now, where's Kathleen? I'm not forgetting that she has waited four years for this moment.

KENNETH: But I'm not fit—

OWEN: Not fit, my eye! You talk just like all shell-shockers. Why, inside of thirty days, with your mind full of happiness, you'll be playing cricket! (KATHLEEN, in traveling dress, comes out of the house. She sees JOHN with an arm about KENNETH'S shoulder, and cannot believe her eyes. JOHN pushes KENNETH gently toward her and, motioning to OWEN, drags him out. For a long moment they stand looking at each other.)

KENNETH (gently): What was it you taught me four years ago? Oh, yes—it's long been my intention—

KATHLEEN (gasping): You said those years over there had changed your heart!

KENNETH: My heart hasn't been over there. It's been here all the time.

KATHLEEN: You said you didn't care any more. You said it yourself!

KENNETH: Never mind that. It's long been my intention to ask a question of you.

KATHLEEN (tremulously): Dear me, how interesting! What can it be?

KENNETH (taking her hand): Miss Dunganon—Kathleen—may I call you Kath-

leen? If you can find it in your heart to care for a miserable, broken-down—

KATHLEEN: How dare you talk like that about the man I love?

There is general rejoicing when Owen and John come in again to receive Kathleen's hugs and tearful gratitude. A little later the two old men sit to play dominoes once more, in the moonlit garden.

JOHN: We'll have the wedding here in this garden. It will wipe out the stain.

OWEN (after a play): John, I believe she'll approve of what you've done. When you meet her, she'll be glad—I'm sure.

JOHN: So am I. When I meet her— (His head nods as if he were asleep.)

OWEN (peering at JOHN): I would like to play one game and have you keep awake till the end! (Seeing JOHN'S head settle into his arms on the table, he crosses to his side and puts his hand on his shoulder.) Dear old John! (He steals quietly into the house. The garden is a flood of brilliant, gorgeous silver. Suddenly JOHN is seen standing by the table—and also seated in the chair exactly as before. The gate opens. MOONYEEN appears in her wedding gown.)

JOHN: Oh, my dear—thank God! You've come back to me!

MOONYEEN (gently): I've been here all the time, only you couldn't see me because you've been such an obstinate dear silly! Keeping those two dear things apart!

JOHN: You won't go away any more—now that I've made it right?

MOONYEEN: Never any more!

JOHN: Why, you're in your wedding dress—just as you were that night! And as beautiful, as fresh, as young—as if fifty years were only a day—but I—How can you bear to look at me? I'm old—my face is lined.

MOONYEEN: I see no lines.

JOHN: I'm bent, and feeble—

MOONYEEN (indignantly): You're as straight and tall as a poplar.

JOHN: You see me—like that?

MOONYEEN: I see you like that.

JOHN: When shall we be together—always?

MOONYEEN: Look there. (She points to the figure of JOHN in the chair.)

JOHN (in wonderment): Oh! Why, then—is this what they call—dying?

MOONYEEN: Yes. Isn't it glorious? And isn't it stupid to be afraid of it?

JOHN (gayly): Who's afraid?

MOONYEEN: Some poor dears are. But they'd go "smilin' through" the years if they knew what they'd find at the end of the road.

"Somebody's Knockin' at Yo' Do'"

By Henry C. Vance

Author of "The Sneeze Play," "Blondes and Brunettes," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. J. PECK

Just to make you laugh, Henry C. Vance gives you this very funny bit from the lives of some of our unbleached Americans.

ULYSSES STEBBINS stood in the doorway of his shack and looked longingly at the one-room home he was preparing to turn his back upon. Vagrant sunbeams found their way through the cottonwood foliage and aided in giving the pansy beds a more radiant touch; a mocking bird contributed a lilting carol from its oaken perch, while a roving breeze drifted in from the near-by woodland hills, laden with the fragrance of honeysuckle and woodbine.

It was Monday morning, a spring morning, perfect in its beauty and charm. Azalee always came from the hotel on Monday mornings after the breakfast hour, to start her washing. And at the moment she was in the back part of the premises, bent over a scrubboard, protected from the smoke screen of the boiling black pot by a sunflower hedge, vociferous and happy.

Despite the fact that she had toiled industriously from sun to sun, since the eventful day of her marriage to Ulysses, Azalee Stebbins had been left none the worse for wear. She was a chocolate-complexioned woman of rather plump proportions, medium of stature, but gracefully featured withal and a type of dirttown beauty good to look upon.

Azalee worked so that she and her shiftless husband might exist; labored happily and at length, with never a grumble over his innumerable shortcomings. No longer than thirty minutes before she had deposited a boun-

teous breakfast on the table so Ulysses might appease his hunger. She had brought this from the hotel kitchen and had seen to it that Ulysses had a generous quantity of edibles.

Bending over the board she was singing happily, and as Ulysses gave his domicile a parting survey, he heard from the wash sector of the estate:

"Somebody's knockin' at yo' do', at you' do', Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'."

May be a preacher, Ah don't know, Ah don't know,

May be a preacher, Ah don't know, Ah don't know,

Oh-o-o, Mary, Oh-o-o, Marthy,
Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'."

Ulysses looked longingly in the direction whence came the peculiar Southern chant. He regretted exceedingly to leave the industrious Azalee, not especially because of any love he might possess for his wife, but she had always been a good provider. Ulysses had brains enough to realize that he would have to search at length for one who would treat him as well or overlook his discrepancies as had Azalee. Still, it was entirely imperative that he bid good-by to local scenes, the necessity of his departure having been self-inflicted.

The night before, Ulysses had entertained a number of brethren at his shack with a dice game. Fortune had failed to smile on him and, as a consequence, Ulysses soon found himself without funds. The temptation to visit Azalee's bank had been too great to resist. He had lifted the loose stone

from the hearth, had felt down in the crevice, bringing forth forty-two dollars and fifty cents. Ordinarily, Ulysses would have replaced a major portion of this money, but there stood his competitors staring wild-eyed at the roll. Pocketing the money for safe-keeping, he reentered the game, falling easy prey to the intriguers.

Azalee never returned from church on Sunday nights until near the midnight hour, and Ulysses had gone broke before eleven. He had chased the boys from the cabin, tied it up as best he could, and had hoped and prayed that his spouse would not visit her secret vault before morning. Luck had been with him in this instance and the embezzling Ulysses had promised himself that he would arise early, get a day's start from the wrath of Azalee, and would never venture to return to the family hearthstone, unless he could bring forty-two dollars and fifty cents with him.

Having little hope of ever accumulating this much wealth, it was a permanent farewell that Ulysses Stebbins gave his wife and his home. With sudden action Ulysses stepped from the doorway and down the street at a lope. The morning through-freight was approaching town and Ulysses had heard the engine's whistle. He reached the water tank ahead of the train, hearing Azalee's voice still busy on its favorite song:

"May be de doctor, Ah don't know, Ah don't know,
May be de doctor, Ah don't know, Ah don't know,
Oh-o-o, Mary, Oh-o-o, Marthy,
Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'."

This lanky specimen of ebony climbed aboard the freight, and as Azalee washed on, unmindful of her losses, Ulysses, the absconder, heard the cringe of wheels, the clatter of brakes, and received showers of cinders, as he stood between cars and

was whirled farther and farther away from the scene of his theft.

Azalee sensed trouble at the noonday meal when Ulysses failed to make his appearance. Her fears grew when the coming of supper failed to bring her husband. The truth began to seep in and the perturbed Mrs. Stebbins sought the hearth. When her fingers encountered a vacuum beneath that stone and she made the discovery that her money was gone, Azalee turned nearer white than she had ever been.

This disaster left her in a semiconscious state. She sat down upon the floor and cried, and after the tears came more earnest thought.

"Trust in de Lawd," muttered the victim of Ulysses' theft. And arriving at this conclusion, she burst into song: "May be ol' Satan, Ah don't know, Ah don't know,
May be ol' Satan, Ah don't know,
Oh-o-o, Mary, Oh-o-o, Marthy,
Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'."

At that moment, there came a tap at the main entrance to the Stebbins' mansion. Azalee sprang to her feet and started across the floor, attaching no significance to the timeliness of the knock with the words she had been singing.

In the semidarkness stood the Reverend P. Q. Cizzum, Azalee's pastor.

"No, it ain't Satan, Sistah Stebbins," said the parson with a laugh.

"Now, suh, Ah sees it ain't. How is yo' dis ebenin', pahson?"

"Po'hly, mighty po'hly, Sistah Stebbins. Spring weather's mighty pretty, but it sho' do stuh up the rheumatiz."

"Won't yo' come in an' set a while?"

"Much erblige, thought Ah'd drap aroun' an' see how it wuz with yo' soul."

"Mah soul is all right, but Ah sho' is in trouble."

"Don't tell, Sistah Stebbins! Yo' sho' wuz singing mighty happy to be a victim ob trouble."

"Yassuh, Ah wuz singin' all right, but Ah did dat after Ah decided to trust in de Lawd, Brothah Cizzum."

"Dat sho' is fine, sho' is. When a body can trust in de Lawd an' sing when attacked by some great clammy, dey is sho' on de highway dat leads to de pearly gates."

"Sho' do help. Set right down, Brothah Cizzum, an' have some suppah. Ah done brought dis to Uly f'um de hotel, but he ain't comin' back."

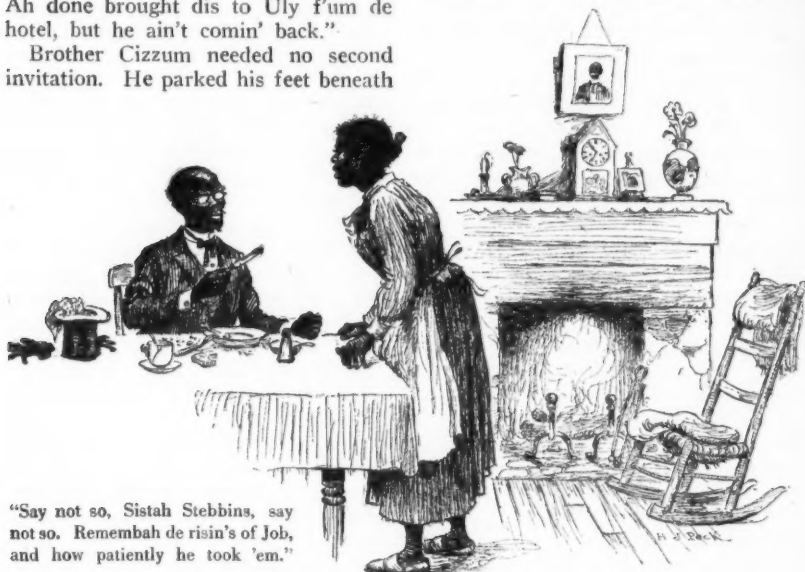
Brother Cizzum needed no second invitation. He parked his feet beneath

"Well, sistah, how cum yo' say yo' is only tol'able?"

"Tol'able ain't no name fo' it, Brothah Cizzum. Ah's jes' downright de mos' misfortunatest pusson yo' evah saw."

"Say not so, Sistah Stebbins, say not so. Remembah de risin's of Job, and how patiently he took 'em."

"De risin's ob Job mighta been pretty



"Say not so, Sistah Stebbins, say not so. Remembah de risin's of Job, and how patiently he took 'em."

the little table, placed his frayed hat beside the viands on the table, and went after the impromptu feast with a vim.

P. Q. Cizzum might have been greatly interested in the misfortune which had befallen his star church member, but the account of the tragedy and his sure-fire sympathy could come later. Now was a time for action, for such meals as this did not come his way often.

Finally he pushed his chair back from the table, looked gravely and sympathetically into the eyes of the sad-looking Azalee, and said:

bad, but dey can't compare to de up-risin's of Ulysses."

"Mighty bad to hab a husband lak dat, but yo' mus' reckonile yo'se'f."

"Dat's de trouble, Brothah Cizzum, Ah ain't got 'im."

"Which?"

"Ah ain't got 'im, he done lef' me."

"Is dat no-'count Uly done lef' yo', sistah? Yo' ought to be laffin' stid ob lookin' sad. Good riddance ob bad rub-bish, dat's whut Ah calls it."

"But he took fo'ty-two dollahs an' fo' bits whut belongs to me."

"Say dat ag'in, sistah."

"Uly done reached down on de hearth wheah Ah keeps mah sof' money an' skeedaddled f'um dis place."

"Sistah Stebbins, does yo' means to tell me dat yo' had dat much money heah?"

"Yassuh, fo'ty-two dollahs, an' fo' bits."

"Cou'se, Ah sympathizes wif yo', but su'ves yo' right, su'ves yo' right."

"How come it do? Yo' means to tell me dat de bank wuz de place to put dat money?"

"Naw'm. It's jes' a case ob de wrath ob de Lawd bein' brought down upon yo' haid."

Azalee's eyes doubled their dimensions, following this statement. Her knees contracted a palsied effect, her nerves were aquiver. Had not this man who communed with the Almighty daily, and sometimes between meals, told her that she was an especial target for the wrath of God?

"How is it yo' means de Lawd's angry wif me, Brothah Cizzum?"

"Simply dis, sistah: yo' wusn't totin' fair. Yo' should ob brought mos' ob dat money to me to see dat it went through de propah channels in ouah missionary wu'k fo' furrin fields. 'Stid ob dat, yo' been holdin' out on de Lawd. Ah sho' is su'prised dat a sistah ob yo' spi'itual standin' done ben backslidin' lak dat."

Azalee was sobbing. Accused as perpetrator of a crime against religion made her more miserable than ever.

"Don't 'cuse me ob fallin' f'um grace, please don't, Brothah Cizzum. Ah sho' is sorry Ah done it. Ready right now to go to de mou'nah's bench."

"Don't cry, honey, don't cry. Jes' let dis be a lesson an' a 'zample to yo'. In de day to come remembah dat ol' Brothah Cizzum right heah fo' 'sultation, and dat de Lawd rightfully owns paht ob de money what yo' gits ahaid on."

Before Brother Cizzum left the shack

Azalee had dried her tears and was looking upon the future more optimistically, but she was a bit lonely that night and in the days to come. Ulysses was undoubtedly trifling and lazy to an extreme, but there was no denying that he had been good company.

Spring ran into summer and the fag-end of the heated term brought Mr. J. Frank Rushton on his annual automobile tour. Mr. Rushton was a business man and had gathered a goodly share of this world's goods and was occupied in the gentle pastime of gathering more. Still, each summer, he made it a point to steal away from his business interests for a month, take his family, and enjoy a vacation motoring over the country.

A broken axle was responsible for J. Frank's sojourn of three days in Locust Grove. Facilities for repairing the car were not to be found in such a provincial town, and he was forced to await the coming of a new axle by express.

As a consequence, J. Frank, his family, and the negro chauffeur, Jake, accepted the inevitable, but welcomed a three-day sojourn at the Locust Grove Hotel, the town's best and only hostelry, with no great show of enthusiasm.

A joyful disappointment awaited them. That first night at the hotel had been a blissful one, as the Rushton family had peacefully courted Morpheus on the first feather beds they had ever come in contact with. The night's rest had been refreshing.

Following this, came one of the most wonderful breakfasts that J. Frank had ever experienced. Good, home-cured, country ham, eggs—products of the day before—and those biscuits! J. Frank consumed biscuit after biscuit, until his good wife looked upon him with eyes of disapproval.

"Best breakfast I've ever had," complimented J. Frank.

"Thanky," muttered Steve Webb, proprietor of the establishment. Steve received compliments on the culinary facilities of his hotel with monotonous regularity.

"I just must have another of those remarkable biscuits," said J. Frank with a slight show of embarrassment.

"Don' feel a-tall backwards, they was put here to be et up," replied the pudgy Mr. Webb.

"Who cooked them?"

"The black gal what served 'em."

"She's some cook!"

"I'll say she is."

Azalee heard these compliments as she stood in the doorway, and a row of gleaming ivories showed between two red lips with a jetty black ground.

J. Frank finally departed from the dining room, depositing a dollar tip on the table as he left. It was the largest Azalee had ever received in her career as combination chef and waitress. She placed the perquisite in the pocket of her gingham apron, murmuring:

"De Lawd giveth, an' de Lawd taketh away!"

Jake, the chauffeur, and J. Frank, his employer, went over the hill to take a peep at the broken-down motor car, to ascertain how it had fared through the night, and, as they made their way up the incline, music, manufactured in the kitchen of the hotel, with a clatter of dishes for an accompaniment, came to their ears. Azalee was in a happy frame of mind, following the generous tip, and was singing:

"May be Mr. Rockefeller, Ah don't know,

Ah don't know,

May be Mr. Rockefeller, Ah don't know,

Oh-o-o, Mary, Oh-o-o, Marthy,
Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'."

Despite his interest in the welfare of his car, Mr. Rushton could not get his mind off the excellent qualities of the cuisine of the local hostelry.

"Gee, those were the best biscuits ever! They melted in your mouth."

"Ah knows dey does, boss," replied Jake with a grin. "Dat 'oman passed biscuits to me in de kitchen 'twell Ah thought her ahm was gwine drop off."

"So you got some of the same brand?"

"Sho', cap'n. Don't see me missin' nothin' lak dem biscuits. Ham, too. Nevah et sech 'licious ham since heah Ah been."

"Wouldn't it be great if I could get a cook like that back home, Jake?"

"Yo' done spoke a pahable. Dem 'omans what yo' gets can't get to fust base wid dis Azalee. 'Sides, dey ain't no 'pendance to be put in 'em. Bet yo's had ten cooks de pas' yeah."

"Very. conservative estimate. The cook problem has everybody worried in the city, Jake."

"Yassuh, dat's what Ah knows, an' Ah was jes' thinkin'——"

"You were thinking what?"

"Jes' thinkin', boss, dat's all."

"Out with it, you black rascal."

Had it not been for Jake's dress-suit complexion, one would have noted a reddish glow creep into his cheeks. Jake, to be frank, was blushing.

"Ah—er—ah was jes' thinkin' why'n't yo' take dat Azalee back home wif yo' fo' a cook, boss?"

"By George, Jake, that's a wonderful idea! No one would ever dream you were able to produce a brain-child like that."

"Doesn't know nothin' 'bout no brain-child, but I sho' can realize wif bof eyes shut dat 'oman is de cook-in'est gal whut is!"

"Do you think I could lure her away, Jake?"

"Specks yo' could, wif a li'l 'sistance. Want me to 'proach her on de subject?"

"To be sure. And use every means of argument available. Life would be worth living again if I could capture a cook like that. All of Mrs. Rushton's worries would be over."

As the meals rolled by, J. Frank Rushton's longing for a cook of Azalee's caliber grew into an obsession. He concluded that he must have Azalee for his own kitchen at any cost.

The better half of the Rushton household was also delighted with the meals, but no woman has ever been endowed with an appetite of the caliber of the normal male, who can get more enjoyment out of a two-inch steak than one of the gentler sex out of a hamper of flattery.

The Rushtons were enjoying a meal in the hotel dining room a day or so later. The shipment of the axle for the car had not come as promptly as had been at first hoped for. Mr. Rushton had started on his sixth biscuit when he was suddenly halted in the fletcherizing proceedings by a clatter of dishes in the kitchen.

Guests made hurried entrance to the scene whence came the commotion.

They found Chauffeur Jake wildly running around the room with a plaster of pie dough clustered around his features. Azalee, hands upon hips and face registering anger, was watching the victim of her wrath as he went through gyrations and contortions.

Mr. Rushton, viewing the predicament of his servant with alarm, demanded sternly:

"What's the meaning of all this?"

"Dat boy ob yo's insulted me, dat's why come it!"

Jake had not removed a sufficient amount of the dough from his face to state his side of the case.

"I'm sure there must be some mistake," replied Mr. Rushton. "Jake always conducts himself as a gentleman."

"Gen'man nothin'! Dat boy got all kinds of wicked notions in his haid."

"What did Jake say to you?"

"Axed me how Ah would like to go to de city to live."



"Well, what's wrong with that?"

"Ev'thing. He knows Ah'm perfectly good chu'ch niggah, what ain't going' to run off wif no city dude like him."

"You misinterpreted Jake's meaning, Azalee. He doesn't want you to elope with him. He was speaking in my behalf."

"Which?"

"He was interceding for me."

"What yo' mean by dat, white folks?"

"I told Jake to speak to you about accompanying us back home. I want you to be my cook."

Jake broke into the dialogue at this juncture.

"Yassum, dat's what Ah was tryin' to do, Miss Azalee. 'Fo' de Lawd, dat was what Ah was aimin' at."

"Den, whyn't yo' say so?"

"Didn't g'ime no chance, Miss Azalee. Yo' done plastered dat bowl



Azalee, hands upon hips and face registering anger, was watching the victim of her wrath as he went through gyrations and contortions.

of dough ovah my haid, befo' Ah gits a chance to explanate."

"Well, Ah sho' is sorry, Mistah Jake, dat Ah was laborin' under a misapplication."

"Ah is, too, hon—Ah means Miss Azalee."

Mr. Rushton thought it an appropriate time to press his plea.

"Yes, Azalee, I asked Jake to speak to you about working for me."

"But Ah can't do it, boss."

"And why not?"

"'Cause Ah was bohn'd and raised in dis town, an' Ah would feel lost in de city."

A good offer was forthcoming as to salary, which caused Azalee to weaken. The thing that really brought her to an acceptance, however, was the

assertion that she could ride to the city in the car. Automobiles were not very plentiful in Locust Grove and Azalee had never been initiated, into the thrills accompanying a motor ride. A vision of a lengthy ride in the handsome car caused her to answer in the affirmative.

And, thus it happened that the Locust Grove Hotel lost its cook, Parson Cizzum lost his most ardent supporter and contributor, and Chauffeur Jake lost his heart.

Jake had been smitten from the first. Days of association in the

kitchen had fanned the flames of love, but the rude jolt he had received from that shower of dough had cooled his ardor a bit, and while the thrill was there when Azalee deposited her form by his side and the tourists bade Locust Grove good-by, he made sure that this thrill passed unnoticed by the woman at his side.

The next few months passed more peacefully for the Rushton household, as far as the kitchen sector was concerned, than at any time in their domestic career. Azalee was not only an ideal cook, but she bought her supplies economically as well, whittling down a grocery bill that had always been wont to make an altitude record in price from month to month.

Those who have waxed warm be-

neath the neckband over the discrepancies and shortcomings of household help, who have petted and coddled servants in order to keep them in the service, and who have pleaded with employment agencies for relief, will not wonder at the contentment enjoyed by J. Frank Rushton with the knowledge that he had one of the best cooks this side of the north pole and a thoroughly reliable negro chauffeur who had been in his employ for years.

In fact, bliss seemed to pervade every nook and cranny of the Rushton home. Jake had been in love with Azalee from the start, madly, passionately in love with this creature from the rural districts. He had never ceased aspiring to call the voluptuous Azalee "Mrs. Jake Johnsing."

As for Azalee, she had been dazzled by Jake's city chivalry, his alertness to do her every bidding. This was something of an innovation to country-bred Azalee, who, in her limited experience with the male of the species, so far as darktown circles were concerned, had found them lazy to an extreme, ever ready to allow their wives or sweethearts to do the bulk of the work.

Jake realized that her attitude, since the dough-smearing incident at Locust Grove, had changed toward him, but he was also aware of the fact that Azalee held aloof from him at times. In fact, he felt that there was something in her past she was trying to hide, something that took the form of an obstacle to their friendship and love.

This feeling was correct. Azalee had never told her suitor that she had a living husband and had not been divorced. She had not figured it worthy of mention or important enough to announce at first. Then, as her infatuation for this immaculate Beau Brummel grew, she hesitated and postponed. It was an unpleasant task, and this caused her to procrastinate.

She had just finished with the dishes

one morning when Jake thrust his kinky head in the doorway and beamed upon her.

"Want to run ovah to Miss Hawkins wif me in de cah?" he asked.

"Why come yo' goin' to Miss Hawkins?"

"Mistah Frank done bought a set ob books f'um Mistah Hawkins an' wants me to fetch 'em in de cah."

"Be wif yo' in a minnit, deah," she replied smilingly.

Jake was enraptured at this show of sentiment. It undoubtedly meant that he was making progress, even though the going had been slow, in his conquest for the adorable Azalee's heart and hand.

She stepped into the car, assisted by her worshipful suitor. After he had seated himself at the wheel, a thrill shot through Jake as he realized that she snuggled just a wee bit in his direction.

"Nice day, Sistah Azalee," he finally stammered.

"Puffec'ly lovely, Jake."

Jake piloted the car a roundabout way, entering the park for a spin through its pretty roadways. He had a faint suspicion that Cupid was shadowing him and he thought the park a romantic spot to pour forth avowals of love.

The machine came to a sudden halt.

"What's de mattah?" asked Azalee.

"Doesn't know. Spec's Ah bettah get out an' see," was the reply.

"Ain't dis de mos' saloobrius scenery though?"

"Puffec'ly grand!"

"Let's get out and set a while."

"Was jes' goin' to sugges' dat."

A few moments of silence.

"Got somethin' Ah wants to say to yo', Miss Azalee."

"Ain't nobody to in'trup' yo'."

"In de fu'st place, dey ain't a thing de mattah wif dis ca'h, 'ceptin' dat Ah choked de engine."

"How cool."

"How come yo' say dat?"

"Yo' oughtn't to choke anything."

"Dat's speakin' in terms of automobilology. What Ah means is dat de ca'h didn't come to a stop of its own violation."

"Ah knowed it didn'."

"How come yo' realize dat?"

"'Cause Ah knowed yo' wanted to make talk wif me 'bout yo an' mah-se'f, and was jes' beatin' roun' de bush."

"Dat makes it easier," said Jake with a sigh.

"Ah thought it would he'p a lil'."

"Azalee, deah, Ah craves yo'! Ah wants yo' fo' mah own!"

"Yo's been mighty nice to me, Jake."

"Nice, nothin'. Ain't treated yo' neah like Ah would, if Ah had de jack. Ah sho' does ado'ah yo', baby."

"Dis ado'ahin' bizness ain't been all on one side, nuthah," beamed Azalee with a coy smile.

This assertion was too much for Jake. He could control his emotions no longer. These had been pent up for months, due to Azalee's aloofness. His strong arms reached out and he crushed the unresisting and irresistible Azalee in his arms.

"Come out of the clinches, and move on."

This rude interruption from Patrolman O'Hara, as he twirled a club in menacing fashion, routed Dan Cupid, broke into the happiest moment of Jake's life, and brought the enraptured Azalee back to earth.

"Move on, I say, before I run you in to the station," rasped the irate policeman. "Bad enough for young white couples to be spooning round in this park when it's dark, let alone a couple of niggers in broad, open daylight!"

"Scuse me, boss," said Jake sheepishly.

"Us didn' mean no ha'hm," cooed

Azalee, and the big car gathered speed and glided along the boulevard and out on to the public highway once more.

"Sho' wisht Ah could ob axed yo' to marry me, befo' de int'ruption," whispered Jake.

"Maybe it's a good thing yo' didn'."

"How come yo' say dat?"

"Hon, don't yo' know dat 'omans can't gib dey answer on de spurt ob de minnit?" evaded Azalee. "Dey al-lers got to settle a question lak dat when dey's off by deyse'f somewheah. A 'oman would promise mos' anything when she's in de ah'ms ob her lovah, deah. She got to thrash such serious questions out by her lonesome."

A few blocks of silence and the car drew up near the curb in front of the Hawkins home. Jake bou-'d out of the machine and strode to the rear of the house.

Azalee, left to herself, basked in the sun and wondered if the joy to be found inside the pearly gates and on the streets paved with gold could compare with her present state of ecstasy.

The clatter of a lawn mower had drowned out a mocking bird's efforts to gladden his hearers, at the time the car had halted in front of the Hawkins home. The rattle of the mower had ceased now, however, and Azalee heard the sweet notes as they came from the musical throat of this feathered songster. She had played audience to hundreds of mocking birds back home in Locust Grove, but this one, it seemed in the enraptured Azalee, made the sweetest music of all. She looked dreamily at the skies, then closed her eyes in perfect contentment.

"Mawnin'!"

That greeting came like a shot from a cannon. With distorted eyes, and horror-stricken, Azalee gazed to the sidewalk and looked into a familiar face.

"Uly!" she shrieked.

"Dat's me," grinned her husband.

Azalee's tongue clove to the roof of her mouth and refused to negotiate even the fraction of a sentence.

"Ain't yo' glad to see me, Az?" he queried.

Silence made up the sum total of her response.

Ulysses, undaunted by the conversationless attitude of his companion, continued:

"Don't guess yo' is 'specially 'lighted, though. Ah seen yo' handsome 'scoht.

Yo sho is puttin' on style fo' a country nigger."

More silence.

"Better pay me some min'. Might want me to make bon' fo' yo' ob yo' hits de jail."

The mention of jail so brusquely brought Azalee to her senses and gave her power of speech.

"Why come yo' say somethin' about jail, triffin' thief, what sneaks an' steals 'fenseless 'oman's foh'ty-two dollahs an' fo' bits? Yo' is de one what ought to be goin' to jail."

"Hol' on. How yo' goin' prove dat? 'Sides, Ah's got de goods on yo'."

"Why come yo' say dat?" asked Azalee, startled.

"'Sperience is a won'ful thing, Az. Ah got mahse'f some 'sperience since Ah been in dis town. Ah knows a whole lot 'bout de law."

"Well, what if yo' does?" defiantly.

Ulysses' tones grew stern and his attitude was menacing.

"Evah heah 'bout Big Amy?"

"Can't say dat Ah has," coldly.

"Well, Mis' Stebbins, it's 'bout time yo' was learnin'. Big Amy was a gal jus' 'bout like yo', what had herse'f three or fo' husbands all to once. It was agin' de law and dis Big Amy landed smack-in de chain gang. Same thing dat happened to her is sho' liable to happen to yo'."

The truth began to dawn. Ulysses thought she had already taken unto herself another lord and master. Azalee was in a pitiful plight. She feared Jake would return at any moment and learn the truth. She had come to grief just at a time when the world had seemed more blissful than since she had joined its forces.

It was readily to be seen that fortune by no means had beamed on Ulysses since last



"Azalee, deah, Ah craves yo'! Ah wants yo' fo' mah own!"

she had gazed upon his lazy frame. Two bits made up the sum total of his cash funds, his toes showed a tendency to creep through the perforated uppers of his shoes, and his raiment was frazzled to the extreme in sundry spots. Ulysses, however, had been doing a deal of thinking and scheming while he taunted his wife. Realizing that she had become frightened by his bold assertions, Ulysses continued:

"Co'se, yo' can git out ob dis mess fo' a 'sideration."

"What does yo' mean?" pleadingly.

"Well, if yo'd leave about twenty-five dollahs fo' me at de E. Pluribust Unum Seegar sto' by to-morry mawnin, yo' awful wedded husban' would skip dis town an' leave yo' to yo' dollin' friend."

Jake rounded the house, whistling. Ulysses took the cue and ambled back to his deserted lawn mower, while Azalee greeted her returned hero with a rather shameful look.

The books were placed in the tonneau, the motor started, and the perturbed Azalee was whisked away from the unpleasant scene. The fiendish Ulysses, with twenty-five dollars in sight, left a half-finished lawn to boost the ire of the owner of the premises, and shuffled from the scene of his recent labors.

That evening, prior to the dinner hour, J. Frank Rushton sat reading the late editions. Mrs. Rushton was busy on a paper she was scheduled to read to the Thursday Afternoon Study Club, while Azalee was busy preparing dinner in the kitchen. As she went about her labors, she sang:

"May be de debbil, Ah don't know, Ah don't know.

May be de debbil, Ah don't know.
Oh-oh-oh, Mary, Oh-oh-oh, Marthy,
Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'."

"The biscuits might be burned tonight, for Azalee is in a troublous frame of mind," said J. Frank.

"How do you know she isn't in a good humor?" asked Mrs. Rushton.

"Because I've learned her like a book. When she's religious, she sings of the Lord; if she's been generously dealt with, her song trends toward some wealthy figure; if she's a bit puny, it's always Gabriel or St. Peter who knocks on the door. If the sea is stormy and the waves of adversity are lashing the deck, she invariably calls the attention of her hearers to the fact that Satan is probably the bloke seeking entrance."

Ulysses Stebbins shamelessly collected twenty-five dollars at the E Pluribus Unum Cigar store, and equally as shamelessly sought out the nearest dice game on Dark Row. Despite his eloquence, however, in addressing the cubes, they refused to be sweet to him and his pleadings for "nat'chals" were apparently lost on desert air, for his ill-gotten gains were soon exhausted and he wandered forth from the establishment in his natural state of delinquency.

Three days had passed since the unhappy episode which had cast a shadow over Azalee's erstwhile sun-strewn pathway of love. Her chief occupation during those three days and nights was eluding the persistent and puzzled Jake. Then, during the afternoon, as she sat applying her guaranteed hair-straightener, she heard a whistle, which peculiarly reminded her of the old days at Locust Grove.

Without hesitation, but fearful, nevertheless, Azalee crept to the door and peered up the alley. There, lurking in the shadow of a telephone pole, stood her Nemesis, Uly, grinning, his teeth appearing to Azalee in the form of a serpent's fangs.

He beckoned the trembling Azalee.

Her first impulse was to run in the opposite direction until breathless, but she obeyed the signal and advanced.

"Honey, Ah's broke," confided Ulysses in muffled tones.

"Don' honey me, yo' black scoun'el!"

"Don' be so sassy wid me, Az. Jus' membah what happened to dis heah big Amy Ah was tellin' yo' 'bout."

"Why come yo' can't leave me alone?"

"Tends to after dis, but Ah's got to have fifteen dollahs."

"Ain't got it."

"Yes yo' is."

"If Ah gets fifteen dollahs, will yo' go way an' let me res' in peace?"

"Sho will. Get dat fifteen dollahs, an' yo' won't see mah face no mo' in dis town."

"Wait heah, den, an' Ah'll try an' get it fo' yo'."

Azalee appeared on the scene again presently, silently turned over the money to her tormentor, as silently turned on her heel, walked back to the house, entered, and slammed the door.

The dusky Venus of the Rushton kitchen knew only enough law to realize that she couldn't marry Jake until a divorce was procured from Ulysses, but she was too ignorant to figure just how she should go about getting a divorce. And too, she was fearful lest Jake should become cognizant of the fact that she had already been shackled by the nuptial chains.

Azalee was fully aware of Jake's devotions, but doubted that it would continue once he learned her true status as a matrimonial prospect. Jake, according to her argument, was too exacting and fastidious to accept a second-hand wife.

On top of all this, Azalee placed as a certainty the probability that Ulysses would return for more money as soon as his present funds had been exhausted, and just where the next installment to be demanded by Uly would come from, was something else again.

It was all too much for this ignor-

ant country girl. She gave up in despair, realizing that she could not longer weather the storm. Azalee had reached the end of her tether. In this distressing hour, even the balm of all her ills, "Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'," had completely abandoned her.

She resolved to resign her position in Mr. Rushton's employ, to collect her withdrawal fee from her favorite society, and to ride as long as the money lasted. She couldn't stand to face Jake another day. She would away to fields anew and try to forget. This, it seemed, was the only escape, and she reached the decision with unswerving firmness, planning to make known her intentions at an early hour the following morning.

At the very moment when Azalee nursed her troubles and debated her course of procedure, Jake sat in his own apartment, face clasped in palms, chin almost touching knees, great gobs of gloom surrounding him on every side, a victim of abject despair.

With no knowledge whatever of the problems confronting his adorable Azalee, he had been unable to fathom her actions of recent days. Her cold attitude had chilled him to the marrow and cut him to the quick. He had reached the point of cracking under the strain. To remain in the same house and work for the same employer with a woman who apparently had led him on until he had thought she was almost in his grasp, and then had turned her back on his desires and hopes, was too much for Jake.

"She sho' don' look lak no vampiah," muttered Jake to himself, "but daw-gone if she ain't wrop me 'roun' her li'l fingah an' den laff at how hard Ah is fell."

Bringing this sordid communion with himself to a close, Jake promised himself that he would go to Mr. Rushton the next morning, resign the position he had held for years, and ship



A high board fence, aided by Ulysses' overconfidence as to his ability as a hurdler, brought the chase to a halt.

for parts unknown, just so long as said parts were far enough away, that he might proudly hold his head aloft once more.

Mr. Rushton negotiated a head-high stack of flapjacks at the breakfast hour and smacked over their deliciousness. What a marvel he had in the kitchen! How fortunate was he to have under his roof at his beck and call the two blue-ribbon servants of the entire city! These thoughts coursed his mind as the skyscraper of flapjacks dwindled, and he felt happy, unmindful of the ominous clouds that bade fair to wreck the foundations of his domestic bliss.

He reluctantly evacuated his chair at the table and strolled to the front porch for an after-breakfast cigar and a perusal of the morning paper. He was

engaged in absorbing the contents of a double-suicide episode, when a black head peeped out from the front door screen, its owner saying:

"Mistah Rushton?"

"Yes, Azalee?"

"Got somethin' mighty impohtant to 'scuss wid yo'."

"Won't it keep until to-night? I'm due at the office soon."

"Naw, suh, dat's de trouble, it done kep' too long, now."

"Well, out with it."

"Ah's resignin'."

"You're what?"

"Ah's quittin' mah job."

"Now, Azalee, you can't mean to tell me you're quitting me cold? If you wanted more money, why didn't you come to me? I wouldn't mind adding two dollars a week to your pay."

"It ain't de money, Mistah Frank."

"It couldn't be the treatment?"

"Naw suh, it sho' couldn't. Yo'-all's treated me mighty scrumpshus since Ah's been heah."

"Open up and tell me the whole story, Azalee, and we'll see if matters can't be remedied."

"Ain't no story to tell. Ah's jus' got to quit dis job an' git out ob dis heah town."

"Surely you have a reason for this sudden decision?"

"Yassuh, in co'se, Ah's got mahse'f a reason."

"Why not put me wise?"

"Boss, dis heah is a pussonal 'faih, ve'y pussonal."

"And you'd rather not confide in me?"

"Dat's it, Ah's rether not 'fide."

"I suppose that in leaving you're giving me the customary two weeks' notice?"

"Which?"

"Surely you intend to stay for two weeks until I can get some one in your place!"

Azalee's eyes assumed a startled look.

"You know the law gives me the right to demand that you stay two weeks longer," explained J. Frank with a mischievous gleam in his eye.

Azalee's fright was unmistakable now. Beads of perspiration began to form upon her forehead. Here was the law brought to her attention once more. Finally she managed to blurt: "Co'se, de law is de law, an' if yo' 'sists on mah servishes, dey ain't nothin' fo' me to do but stay. But Ah had counted on leffin' dis heah city even befo' dust."

J. Frank's tones grew more calm and gentle.

"Of course, I'm not going to hold you here for two weeks against your will, Azalee, but I sure would appreciate it if you'd consent to remain until to-morrow. The Hawkins are coming

over for dinner to-night, and we'd be up against it without a cook. Won't you think this matter over and wait until to-morrow?"

"Ah'll stay, sho', an' cook dis heah dinner fo' yo', but as for thinkin' dis matter, Ah's jus' as good as gone, boss."

The conference having reached its climax, Azalee, sorrowful of countenance, backed into the house, progressing toward the kitchen.

J. Frank Rushton jammed his hat down over his ears, summoned Jake with the car, left the house without implanting the usual kiss upon the lips of Mrs. Rushton, and was the living image of gloom as he sat in the car and was whirled toward the business center of town.

Azalee's announcement that she would sever connections with the Rushton household had fallen with the force of a ton of brick upon J. Frank and had left him in possession of a double-jointed grouch.

Suddenly Jake half turned from the wheel and said:

"Guess dis will be de las' time Ah'll evah drive yo' to town, kunnel."

Here was another thunderbolt out of an apparently clear sky.

"I don't get you, Jake," Mr. Rushton managed to gasp with fake nonchalance.

"S'pose yo' thinks Ah's a mighty 'culiah pusson, Mistah Rushton, but Ah's throwin' up dis job fo' a fac'."

"Exceptionally poor attempt to josh me, Jake. Besides, I'm in no humor for jokes this morning."

"Hones', Mistah Rushton, Ah ain't tryin' to joke. Serious is mah middle name. Ah mus' be quittin' dis heah job dat Ah's growed up wid."

"But you can't quit me, Jake! You're part of the fixtures at my house."

"Dat's what Ah was thinkin', boss, till jus' frequen'ly. Sumpum's come

ovah me, kunnel, sumpum's sho' come ovah me."

This double jolt had got on Mr. Rushton's nerves. He was in no frame of mind for the day's work. He wanted to learn the cause of this unexpected and unheralded servants' strike and determined to do so without delay. He ordered Jake to stop the car in order that he might get the whole truth and start remedial procedure that he hoped would clear the situation.

Jake was a bit backward about beginning the story of his infatuation for Azalee but once started, he opened up full force. He recounted the slow procedure of his courtship, the sudden, generous way in which Azalee had spoken words of love, how this display of emotion on her part had thrilled him; then, just as the romance had seemed on its way to success, how she had snubbed him. Jake told of the days of agony.

"Jus, reached a point wheah it look lak mah heart gwine'r bus', boss, an' Ah got to git away f'um dat place, befo' Ah does somethin' despritlike," concluded Jake.

J. Frank Rushton made quite a grotesque figure, sitting in the back seat of his automobile on a public highway, listening to a pitiful narrative from his servant anent the way in which his craft of romance had been dashed upon the rocks and beaten to pieces by the waves of adversity. Important papers awaited his signature at the office, but he determined forthwith to untangle what he was sure was a chain of mistakes. He ordered Jake to drive him home and, arriving there, he bade his chauffeur take the car back to town and remain away from the house for an hour.

How J. Frank Rushton wrung from Azalee the secret she had been keeping, and how he secured from her an admission that Jake was the "dollin'es"

man who ever trod the earth, is of minor consequences. Suffice it to say, he got the whole story from the beginning; learned that she had been married; of the robbery from the hearthstone at Locust Grove; the desertion of the ne'er-do-well husband; her failure to resist the call of love, and of her surrender to Jake's avowals; her meeting with the husband; his successful attempt at blackmail; how she had longed for a divorce, but was totally ignorant of the course in going about getting one, and of her fear that Jake would cease to care for her once he learned that she had been married, and how she had kept this fact secret from him.

The matter was ludicrous in one sense, yet pathetic in another. J. Frank sympathized with the girl.

He was a man of quick decision and equally as swift to act. He was determined to clear up this unpleasantness forthwith, and the honk of an auto horn at the front told him that Jake had returned.

"Azalee, sit steady in the boat," he advised. "I'm your friend, Mrs. Rushton is your friend, and it was foolish of you to think Jake would renounce his love for you. Be as calm and as happy as you can until I return. I hope to have good news for you."

Big tears welled in the eyes of Jake as the story was unfolded by his employer.

"An' jus' think, Ah was fool 'nuff to believe dat mah own dollin' Azalee was a vampiah!"

"She will make you a good wife, Jake."

"Yas suh, an' we'se gwine live wid yo' an' wu'k fo' yo' till Mistah Gabriel come 'long wid his slide trombone. Ah got one reques' to make, though, Mistah Rushton."

"What is it, Jake?"

"Ah axes yo' as a special flavor to

me, let me go wid yo' to look up dis heah Uly Seas."

"Sure, you're to drive me," said Mr. Rushton with a smile, "and we're going to 'begin the hunt now."

"Bes' place to fin' out wheah dis niggah lives is to 'quiah at de E Pluribust Unum Cigah Sto'."

"All right, Jake, full speed ahead to the E Pluribus Unum."

The car whirled through the streets at something in excess of the speed limit, for Chauffeur Jake's dander was up and blood was in his eye. He left Mr. Rushton seated in the car at the curb and started making inquiries, but no one remembered Ulysses at the cigar store, and no one could give him a tip at the barber shop. At Shorty Dorsey's pool parlors, however, he had better luck. Several of a party engaged in the gentle pastime of Kelly pool remembered Ulysses as connoisseur of craps and a devotee of dice.

An angular bit of blackness informed Jake that Ulysses lived in "Alley G off of Fo'teenth Street."

This was enough. Jake was soon steering the car up the glass and rubbish-strewn alley. He came to a halt in front of a shack. A negro woman sat drowsing upon the porch.

Mr. Rushton, fearing that Jake, in his tempestuous frame of mind, would handicap the success of the search, had informed his employee that he would do the talking.

"Morning," said Mr. Rushton cordially.

"Mawnin'," suspiciously.

"Does Ulysses Stebbins live here?"

"Doesn't know him."

"Too bad. Friend of mine told me that Ulysses was the best lawn cutter and landscape man in town. I wanted to get hold of him to do a paying job for me."

A give-away smile played around the woman's lips. She had thought Mr. Rushton an officer of the law.

"Yo' wants him to do some wu'k?"

"Got a good job for him. Do you know anything about him?"

"Yas, suh, Uly's mah husban'."

This remark came near flooring Mr. Rushton and Jake. The former retained his equilibrium, however.

"When could I see him?"

"He be back in a few minnits. Gone up to de sto' to get some sta'ch fo' me."

"I'm in a bit of a hurry," explained Mr. Rushton. "I believe I'll run over to the store and see him."

"Yas, suh. Sto's three blocks down an' one block up."

Ulysses, unmindful of the stormy path that lay before him, emerged from the store as Mr. Rushton drove up.

"Boy, is your name Ulysses Stebbins?" asked Mr. Rushton.

Ulysses looked toward the car and got a glimpse of Jake, recognized him as Azalee's escort of the Hawkins episode, and, with no explanatory remarks whatever, took to his heels.

Jake bounded from the car and gave pursuit.

A high board fence, aided by Ulysses' overconfidence as to his ability as a hurdler, brought the chase to a sudden halt, for he failed to negotiate the fence and, with his back to the wall, he was forced to defend himself.

The two negroes ferociously tore into each other. It was a real fight. Ulysses was just recovering consciousness, when Mr. Rushton, out of breath, arrived upon the scene, caught Jake by the arm, and bade him desist from dealing out further punishment to the suffering Ulysses, who was completely cowed by this time.

"We had better be moving along, Jake," said Mr. Rushton. "I want to say to this rascal, however, that if he doesn't leave this town before to-morrow morning a nice cell is going to be fitted up for him at the city jail. If

you ever give my cook Azalee any more trouble, I'll have you sent up for life."

"An' if yo' evah tries to stah't any mo' of dis Big Amy stuff wid mah Azalee," added Jake, "Ah'll hit yo' so ha'd dey won't be 'nuff lef' fo' de resurrekshun."

"Let's be going, Jake."

"Yas, suh, jes' a minnit," said Jake with a grin, as he reached to the ground and picked up one of his antagonist's teeth which had strayed from its moorings, following a severe uppercut.

"What do you want with that?" queried Mr. Rushton.

"Jes' a li'l soovenear fo' Azalee, dat's all."

With J. Frank Rushton to guide her, Azalee's decree of divorce was forthcoming almost upon demand. Several nights later J. Frank Rushton and his wife sat at the dinner table. They joyously partook of cold ham sandwiches.

"These sandwiches are delicious," confided J. Frank. "I never dreamed that cold dinner could taste so good. Nothing like a change once in a while, eh, mother?"

"Yes," smiled Mrs. Rushton, "but I was just thinking what a crime it would be if your dress suit should rip during the ceremony. You know, dear, Jake is much larger than you."

Next month another funny darky story by Mr. Vance. It is called "One Miracle, C. O. D." You will be sorry if you miss it.



BUBBLES

Lovers promise to tell each other everything, but when they do, they are no longer lovers.

A lot of parents would be less self-satisfied if they knew what a disappointment they are to their children.

No one can repeat the things you haven't said.

Some men use more brain power in making up excuses than they do in avoiding the need for them.

Loafing never yet bought a loaf.

The wise man stops dancing when he finds the fiddler is overcharging him.

The government offers to furnish a bulletin telling how to make whitewash. Is it the kind they use in Washington?

Square people help to make the world go round.

There are sermons in stones, but don't throw that kind of sermons at your neighbor.

A Show *for* Eric

By Anthony M. Rud

Author of "The Great Conspiracy of Silence," "A Turn that Turned too Far," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY MARSHALL FRANTZ

It isn't always sickness alone that hospital walls shelter. There is real human drama—as witness this story of Lydia, scrubwoman, told by a patient who is rich in both sympathy and slang.

A LOT of sympathy's been wasted by the S. P. C. A. and other societies on dogs that have had their tails removed. Laying in bed there, I was kind of moved to wonder if anybody ever'd thought how the tails felt about it. I knew.

Before I stepped on that nail the only part of me that hadn't been all shot with the rheumatiz had been my right leg and foot. This was just what the docs wanted, so they took it, leaving me just the part that ached.

An old cuss fixed like I was gets a kind of antipathy to white gowns and blue stripes. Docs and nurses, smiling professional and not telling you anything, got on my nerves for fair. That was what made me notice Lydia first—that, and the fact that even the boys at the store seemed to get along first rate without the old man to jack them up. They come to see me once—but that ain't got anything to do with Lydia.

It was on one of them blue days that I separate her first from the rest of the scenery. I watch her close, not because she's a walking panacea for the pink-eye, but because she's the only one who hasn't got a dopestick or a thermometer concealed about her.

She's a cork-carpet specialist, her life job being to keep the dirt from showing when the inspector doc makes his regular rounds. One slant at her hands, broad and red in the knuckles and corned-up in the palms, says a

mouthful about what she's been idling away her time doing since she was sixteen. I dope out she knows the feel of a mop better'n my nose knows air.

And now she's got a permanent wave in her backbone from a lotta stooping. Her face probably once was fat like her waistline, too, but now it's flabby, and getting ready to wrinkle bad. At that, it's behind her hair, which is white everywhere except where it's kinda yellow in spots, like some old guys' mustaches. With the sorta patient, beat look she's got in her eyes, you can see that the best Lydia ever coulda been was a chapter on low visibility in females. You can figure her young and spry and shiverin' the shimmy just about as easy as you can figure me, dolled up in five-ouncers, printing a kayo on the chin of Jack Dempsey. And me tied up with rheumatiz.

At first I try to think up something to say to her, but it looks like all we had in common is fifty-odd years which neither of us wants or is proud of. She don't bother, though. She just hobbles in, pulling her pail of suds, slaps the hot soap and water all around the cork carpet, and then slaps it up again, wringing out the cloth every time it gets sogged. Then she hobbles on to number three-forty-six, next to my room, where they's another old fool. When I hear him cussing at everybody, and Lydia, too, when she comes in, I wonder why.

At first I try to think up something to say to her, but it looks like all we had in common is fifty-odd years which neither of us wants or is proud of.

By the time I'm setting up in bed, though, I'm chatting regular with Lydia. It ain't natural for a guy who's been gabby as a solo record on the squealola all his life not to talk to somebody, and Lydia's the only one I see who ain't got smiling professional replies all on tap.

Mostly at first she pretends she don't hear me when I ask her questions, but after I keep it up for three or four mornings she kinda forgets the blank stare when she comes in and nods.

Then, one day when she's about half through the floor, she straightens up

until she ain't much worse than round-shouldered, and looks at the window. Without minding me she goes over and fingers the cheap curtains.

"How—much cost these—you think?" she rasps, and I wonder if her voice is so rusty from not using it any.

"The curtains?" I say eager, glad to guess at anything if it'll make her talk.



"Oh, maybe about three bucks a pair."

"Bucks?" she repeats, the blank look coming back quick.

"Dollars I mean," I says. "About three dollars, I think."

"Three dollars——" I get a full look at her faded-out blue eyes, half hid down in the flaps of skin, and it's funny, but I'd swear I seen something that woulda been a smile if she'd knowed how, coming into them. She was looking right through me, though, and I got a spooky sort of feeling.

"What're you going to do, buy some for the house?" I asks, facetious.

"For my boy!" she says sudden, and I notice the rasp's most gone all of a sudden. "Curtains—he needs them in his room. It ain't got curtains and he's coming home now soon. The paper says——" She stops short and picks up her mop, but I'm not going to be cheated that easy.

"Go on!" I urged. "Tell me about him. What's his name and where is he?"

This brings her head up again, and bless me, if there ain't a coupla tears in the corners of her old eyes.

"Eric!" she says, softer than she's spoke before. "My Eric! He's in France now, the paper says. On his way back from Germany."

"Oh, he's been in the army, eh?"

She just looks at me puzzled.

"What kinda soldier was he?"

"A good soldier!" she flashes. "A fine soldier!"

"I betcha!" I agree enthusiastically. "But was he carrying a gun or was he flying, or——"

"Gun," she answered. "And now he's come home soon. When he's work a while I don't have to scrub no more. My Eric!" She smiles now regular, and I wonder to myself if it ain't the mercy of the Lord her boy is one of of them that's coming back.

"You was telling me about the curtains you was going to buy?" I suggests.

"Yes, I get them—next week!" she says. "This week one more five dollars on his rug for the room, and then I buy curtains."

There was a kinda pride and triumph in her voice that all of a sudden made me feel outa it.

"And you got him a rug, too, eh?"

"Yes, Axyminister!" she answers. "Twenty-two dollars and fifty cents." And then, remembering her job, she finishes up quick.

Next day I ain't feeling so sprightly myself, and all I do is watch her when she's working. I look at her closer, though, and I see the stockings she's wearing are about an inch thick, where they's any stocking at all. On her left ankle, just above the raggy shoe, is a bunch of holes the size of the openings through chicken wire. This ain't what picks my attention, though—the Lord knows my own socks is bad enough most usually. It's the fact that under there is a big bunchy bundle of what looks like a dirty bandage wound round and round. It's the foot she limps with, too.

I asky Miss Bradley, the nurse, about it first time I get a chance. It seems that Lydia's really in a bad way. From standing up on her old number sevens every day for so many years, she's wore out the pep in the walls of her veins.

"But ain't there *anything* she can do for it?" I ask, wondering how come anybody just has to grin and bear a grief like that.

Miss Bradley shrugs her shoulders.

"She has been advised to go to bed with it and give it a long rest," she says, superiorlike. "After four or five weeks, perhaps, if she would wear an elastic stocking—but you know how useless it is to advise anything of the kind to a scrubwoman." And she smiles contemptuous.

I get kind of choky in the throat,

but it's mostly the mad that always grips me when I know arguments ain't worth the wind. Miss Bradley was a trained nurse in a pay hospital where charity cases always got the icy stare. Looking at it cold-blooded, I suppose the directors weren't to blame. The county hospital was made to take care of unfortunates who didn't have the price for a private place; and at that, I've always heard that the hospital I was in didn't make ends meet any too well in spite of being crowded most of the time. During the next couple of days, when Lydia comes in I try to get her to go down and have the charity docs give her bum leg an examination, but it ain't any use.

"I must stay here," she decides, slow and raspy. "My Eric—" And it don't matter a continental hoot to her if her leg rots off, just so she gets curtains and things in that room by the time her boy comes back!

Next day when she shows up, I see something's happened. The limp's too bad to be forgot entirely, but Lydia's somehow changed it till it's almost a hop, skip, jump. And when she goes after the floor, I hear a funny, hoarse kinda noise down in her throat. I listen, scared for the second the old wench is having a death rattle or something, but then I get hep, and almost bust myself laughing! She's *singing*! It's way off the key and all that, but after I get the notion, I figure out it must be a hymn in Svensk or another of them north languages.

"Heard from Eric, Lydia?" I calls out, knowing they's just one big thing that'd make her happy.

She turns quick to me, nodding and smiling. Them old eyes is just almost ready to run over.

"Yes, he's come soon. I got this morning—" And she fumbled in the bosom of her tattered apron, drawing out one of the red-triangled en-

velopes, wrinkled up already by many handlings.

"It say he start the third," she goes on.

"This is the twenty-fourth, ain't it?" I ask.

"Yes! My Eric! It say he's bring a big, wonderful surprise for me, too."

"Maybe a real German helmet," I ventures, cautious.

She snorts disdainful, and the four flaps of skin that once was chins straighten out into one proud old chin.

"I got *two* helmets now!" she says, "And a cross, too. Souveeners!"

"You don't mean it! Well, well, Eric musta walked along right behind the band wagon playing the barrage music. Maybe he's got a hunk of the Clown Prince's coat tails." But Lydia's clean forgot there's any old pegleg in the world called Noonan.

Next morning at the time Lydia usually appears, another mop rustler swushes the suds under my bed. I gather from what she says that Eric has come back, and that Lydia's so happy she's taking a day off to celebrate.

I read three newspapers and a part of a novel that day, but all of it's flat as betless poker. Every now and then I catch myself figuring what a whiz of a dinner Lydia's getting for Eric right about now, or how Eric'll like his Axy-minister or something. Also I wonder if the boy brought back enough of a wad with him so Lydia'll be able to hang up her cue and just enjoy having him for a while.

All of which gets answered next morning. A little bit later than usual, Lydia hobbles in. Her face ain't really all wrinkles, but her hump is back and she don't look like I thought she would. She nods weary to me, and slops some water outa her pail as she sets it down. Her leg acts like it's a lot worse, because she has to stop every now and then to hold it. More'n what I see, I



She didn't bother with English none, and what she said went clean over my noddle, but with them brown eyes flashing it didn't matter much whether it was French or Chineese.

sense that Eric ain't been exactly a cure-all, no matter what's the surprise he's brought back for his mother. I lie there nearly five minutes trying to dope some way I can find out and not cause no trouble, but tact ain't in my line.

"I hears you're to be congratulated, Lydia!" I sings out cheery at last. "Your boy got back whole, didn't he?"

A smile comes to her face and she nods, but I sees her lips working like she wanted to say something only it comes hard. As she looks she leans so heavy on the mop that the wood bends. Her smile don't last long, either.

"Well, that is the best news of the year!" I goes on, acting as if I didn't have no suspicions at all. "Did he get decorated or promoted or anything?"

"He's—officer," she says, gulping. "Sergeant."

"Bully for him! He made good, eh? Was that the surprise he was bringing back to you?"

She shakes her head, but I see there ain't real gladness there because her mouth twitches and she kinda bends her head down slow. Then all of a sudden something breaks. She gives a funny, hoarse noise in her throat and flops down, dropping the mop. Her head is hid in her dirty sleeves on the end of my bed, but I can tell by the way her shoulders shake that she's crying. There ain't no more noise about it; she's just all in and I can see that. The docs had told me that if I try to do too much maybe a blood clot would slip up from my stump and stop my heart, but I take a chance on it. Pulling myself over I reaches and pats her on the back.

"There, there, Lydia," I says soothing, feeling like an old ass while I does it. "What's the matter? Can't I help out some? Is it your leg that's hurting bad this morning?"

That just brings a shake of her head, but after a while I get her so she'll talk

some, and I find out the whole thing. It's a real grief, too. Seems that Eric's surprise is a French flapper he's gone and married. The darn kid's so much in love that he don't even see Lydia no more. The way I dope it out, the only thing that's kept her up for a long time is knowing her boy's on the way home, and now he gets back he's planning on boarding out with his new wife because he don't think Lydia's place is good enough.

"What's he working at?" I ask, wishing I had hold of his ear for just a minute.

"He's washer down at garage," Lydia tells me between sobs. "He only make sixteen dollars a week."

When I wonder how he's going to support a wife on that she gives me a weird tale about something he's making that's going to win a fortune for him. I can't quite savvy the idea, as Lydia ain't any too hep herself, but I do understand that Eric not only ain't planning on living at home, but he ain't got money to waste helping out his ma. Even the fifteen a month he sent her while he was in the service is stopped now, and the government don't help out no more. He wants her to go down to the county hospital to get her leg fixed, but this only makes Lydia feel worse. She's sure it's just because he's ashamed of her and don't want her around. I'm so mad I'm just all hopping down inside, but I try to make her think it's all coming out all right. I tell some lies and do some tall propheting, and finally Lydia climbs up on her bum pins and starts her job again.

I watch her finish and go on to the next room, and then I start. Lydia's give me the name of the garage where Eric's pulling down his sixteen per, and I phone the place. Eric ain't there. They tell me he only works nights, scrubbing Lizzies, but they gives me his address. I scribble a note, and send



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it to him by A. D. T. Then I hunches myself up good and comfortable on the pillows and does some planning. If anything less'n death and dynamite'll start this here ungrateful Swede right why I'm the guy to administer the dose.

Along about four Miss Bradley breezes in and says there's a young fellow by the name of Eric Smith waiting to see me.

"Smith?" I asks. "What's he done with the rest of it?"

This is a new one on Miss Bradley. She had him sign his name on the visiting card, and he wrote it Smith. She don't know he's the son of old Lydia Smithback, so I don't bother to elucidate.

The minute he comes in, though, I have to do some sudden revising of my ideas. He's tall and blond, of course, but he ain't got the selfish lines about his mouth that I'm looking for. Except where the Picardy sun burned him too bad you can see he's all pink and white and young. His eyes is as solemn as a couple of blue beads, and his hair is part plastered flat and part sticking up, where the army barber clipped it too short.

"How come only Smith now?" I says, after I got him to ease into a chair. "The way I heard it was Smithback."

He colored just like somebody spilled red ink on a blotter, and just then I notices his hands for the first time. They're awful big and wide, but they look like they could do things.

"Why, I—you see, it was because I've got such a funny name," he says, nearly busting the brim off'n his straw, twisting it. "Eric Smithback, you know. When I was in school the boys used to call me 'earache, toothache, bellyache, Smithback!' I made up my mind that when I come to go into business I'd be just plain Smith. I told Nannette that a whizz-bang just naturally cut off the 'back'."

"Oh, yes! And Nanette's the new wife, eh?"

He nodded, and a kinda proud grin come to his mouth, but I saw him looking at me funny just the same.

"You're wondering what the devil I'm coming to, ain't you?" I queries. "Where I got my info, and what I'm going to do with it?"

"Well—yes, in a way. It had crossed my mind that perhaps my mother—" He looked down at his hat.

I clears my throat.

"Never mind about that part just now," I says. "You're the one I'm interested in. A bit of news came to me the other day about a young chap who was working on some kinda invention. Seeing as I've got maybe a little bit of capital to sink, I was wondering—"

You oughta seen the pep that come into that guy when I says that! He straightens up in his chair and looks sharp at me, and then he talks. There ain't nothing solemn or bashful about him now. He starts right in Fletcherizing the rag about a new kinda periscope for autos. Says he got the notion when he was squinting through the trench tubes looking for Boches.

As well as I can get it at first, his plan is to manufacture a simple periscope that you can stick in a job so as the image of what's coming on the road behind shows up on the glass that's set in the dash. This gives the driver a good view of everything, eliminates rear-end collisions, and also lets a guy who wants to step on her for a while see when a cycle cop is on his trail.

The last makes a real hit with me, because when I'm out on the open concrete I like to know what fifty feels like, and it's cost me more'n enough to buy a half a dozen of them periscopes, already.

It seems that Eric has been doping it all out and has made up a couple the tubes. He ain't patented them yet,

though, on account of being too broke, and he ain't had no cars to try them on. He took the place down to the garage just so as he could tinker round a little at night when they wasn't anybody to butt in. The hundred-odd bucks he brought back with him is fading fast, though, and he's worried. Not a word about Lydia does he say, however, and this kinda makes me sore.

"Don't you think you oughta try to get a job that'll pay enough to support this wife of yours—not to mention your mother?" I suggests finally. "It'll take a year or two before you're making much dough outa that periscope, even if it pans out big."

This flusters him.

"I—I would if I could," he says, "but what can I find to do? I ain't trained at anything. I'm just as sorry for mother as I can be, but it looks to me as if Nanette and I were going to have an awfully hard rub just to get along."

I kinda get hep to something right then, and I questions him careful. I don't let him on to what I'm driving at, but I find out that he don't know Lydia's really down and out with her game leg. She ain't told him nothing about the curtains or the Axyminister, neither, and he believes that she's an "attendant" at the hospital. Probly she ain't really thought it necessary to slip him the news that she's washing floors. The three a day she's getting looks like big money to him, not being wise to what it takes even to keep a cottage going in these sky-rocketteering times.

I don't promise him nothing, making off I wanta see his machine some before I springs my proposition, but I tell him to come back at eight o'clock sharp next morning, and bring his wife and the periscope, too. Then, after figuring out something on my pad of paper, I eat supper and hit a night's sleep right on the head.

Miss Bradley ain't much of a sport, but when I let her in on the whole dope

she fixes up a screen for me just the way I want it. Guess she ain't really got much against Lydia, only a sorta feeling that women who washes floors ain't worth the trouble. I don't fight with her, though; the party is mine all the way. All she's to do is give the signal. After it's all set, I jerk the stylographic and scribble a coupla blue slips.

Maybe you got a notion of what I supposed Nanette'd be. It was a kinda mixture of the "Follies" and the Russian ballet, with a dash of hot pep that ain't in either. Nanette was going to be a regular seventh daughter of a seventh Bara, or something like that. Them was the kinda dames a guy met up with regular in the Boulevard Lannes and the cancan Montmart and them other gay lanes of Parea—or that's the way I had it, anyway. Like with Eric, though, my advance dope is way off.

Nanette slips in easy with Eric, a slim little brown-eyed doll of a girl who just about comes to his shoulder. She's got her eyes on him when I first sees her, but it ain't the dumb, adoring kinda worship you sees in cows and high-school girls at the matinées. She's a wise little piece, but you see right away she knows she's got the finest man that ever chewed round steak and she ain't taking no chances that he's going to notice nobody else while she's around. There ain't a line about her that ain't got a little curve in it somewheres, and altogether I dope her as one of the easiest ladies to look at I ever seen. If they'd only stuck this here war back in the eighties or nineties! But they was only fighting the Civil War over for the third time then, or trying to kill off typhoid and Spaniards at the same time, and that didn't take me over to Picardy in olive drab. After an eye-ful of her, though, I ain't blaming Eric more'n half as much for forgetting all the rest of the world.

Eric has slipped her the glad news

that maybe I'm going to be an angel for his new reverse English spyglass, and so she's a little nicer than meringue to me. I find her speech remarkable, considering she's just learning it from Eric. It's soft inflected, and maybe a little more even accented than I'm used to hearing, but it don't jar the ears none. Her vocab probly beats Shakespeare's on points when it's scrapping for the lovey-dovey champeepship of verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. It don't go so much further, though, but I see she knows how to camouflage all her puzzlement in the kinda smile that makes her an A-1 listener.

The boy takes off about sixteen gunnysacks from the periscope he's carrying, and breaks right in with the explanation. I let him rave for a while, and so far as I can see the thing looks like a good bet. When you look at the glass that sticks up in the dash of a car you can see the window of the room and all the trees outside just as plain as if you was peeking in the finder of one of these here press cameras.

The only thing that bothers me is how much the devices can be made to sell for. Eric assures me that the price won't be outa reach, though, and I let it go at that. Seems to me that the guys who makes real high-priced cars oughta fall for the scope, even if it can't be tacked on to flivvers. It's got the big advantage over the mirrors most cars use for looking backward in that it shows the whole road clear and plain; no cycle cop can steal up on the blind side like with a regular glass.

The hands of my watch is sliding around toward nine o'clock, though, and I keep one eye on the doorway for Miss Bradley's high sign. Pretty soon she sails past holding up her hand to her forehead. This means that Lydia's in three-forty-four.

Right then I shut off the periscope discourse and chase both Eric and

Nanette behind the screen in the corner. Neither of them wants to hide very bad, but I explain that I'm giving a little show all by myself and if them or the periscope comes outa cover before I give the word, I'm going to bean them with the shoe I got handy for just that purpose. Eric starts to palaver, but I shut him up effectual, telling him if he ever wants his cop glass to get a look-in he's gotta imitate the well-known clam right now. I expect it's because he's been used to hearing all kinda orders he didn't understand, but he don't say no more, and Nanette's as quiet as a striker who's come back to his job.

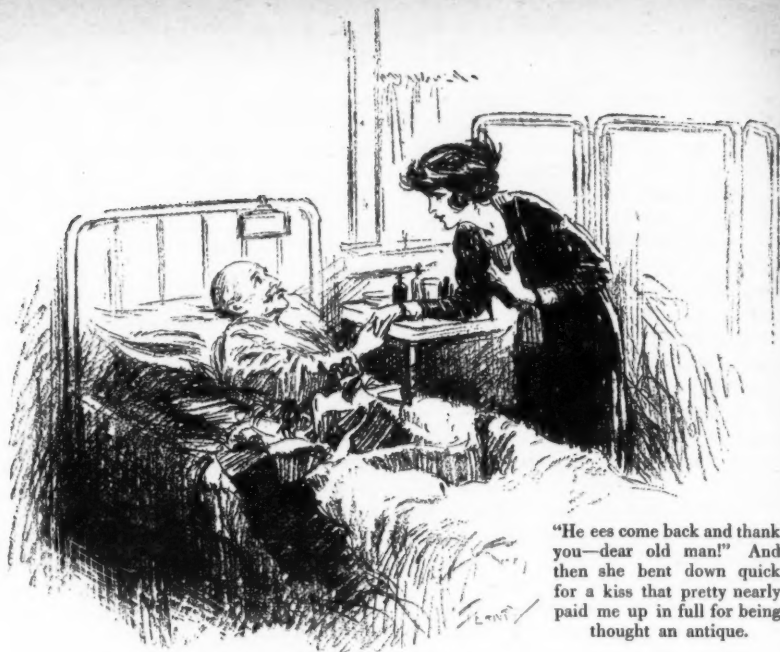
Then Lydia, pulling her pail of suds, backs into the door and pushes it wide open. When I sees the trouble she has just in navigating with the mop and other stuff, I feel like hopping outa bed, stump and all, and helping her. She's maybe even more bent than yesterday, and after one good look I see it's because her spirit's all squashed. She ain't ready to break down like she done the time before; she's just humped over and apathetic—an old woman who ain't got a reason in the world to keep her up, only she can't shuffle off quick enough. Honest, it just give me back that kinda mad feeling I got the first time I heard about Eric. How could any guy, no matter how blind in love he was, miss seeing that his own mother's like that?

I don't bother her for a second or two, till she's fair started. She limps so bad now that she's gotta hold on to the mop or the end of the bed or something when she goes from one place to another. When she stops a second to kinda draw a deep breath, and looks up at me with them full eyes, I just can't stand it any longer.

"I thought you told me your son was back, Lydia?" I asks.

"Yes, he back," she says toneless.

"Well, why the deuce don't he have



"He ees come back and thank you—dear old man!" And then she bent down quick for a kiss that pretty nearly paid me up in full for being thought an antique.

you go to a hospital and take care of yourself, then? First thing you know, Lydia, you'll be as bad off as I am."

She kinda nods, and looks me over slow.

"Worse," she answers, her voice a sorta tired croak. "Doctor says my leg come off or I die. I die! Eric he got no use for me no more."

"Oh, now, Lydia!" I protests. "That ain't reasonable. If you was to tell him now how you scrimped and saved to get him them curtains and that rug for his room, and how you was waiting all the time, just kinda living on in hopes that he'd come back outa hell and be your own boy again, don't you think it'd be different?"

She shook her head wearily, and one of the white, stringy strands of hair fell down over her eyes.

"I no tell," she says. "Young woman

come; old woman go. I go! He not even want my name no more because he's ashamed."

Right then the screen fell over forward with a bang, and I got a flash of a sorta silky tigress as Nanette ran to Lydia. Throwing her arms around the old woman Nanette *lifted* her and set her clean on the edge of my bed. Then, just as if it was all part of the same thing, she turned her pretty head toward where Eric stood. She didn't bother with English none, and what she said went clean over my noddle, but with them brown eyes flashing it didn't matter much whether it was French or Chineese. They's some things that get across in any language; one's love talk and the other's what Nanette says to Eric.

I looked at him, and right then I know the trouble's only started. He's

standing straight and stiff like the corporal of the guard is just getting him ready for inspection, but the boy part of him's clean gone. When I see them blue eyes wide and burning, and the yellow hair all crinkly and standing up, I get a kinda odd notion what them berserks musta been once. He ain't got any more pink and white. His face is just about the color of chalk crayons, only where he's burned it's kinda muddylike, and them big hands open and shut.

"God!" he says, blowing out his breath explosive. I got my suspicion from just looking at him, though, that he ain't calling on no regular God; it's Thor, or Woden, or one of them other Svensk soreheads that he's thinking about.

"Never mind that part," I says nasty. "Some guys take a lotta telling before they get wise. What're you going to do about it?"

He steps up toward the bed, jerky.

"Damn you—Noonan!" he chokes. "Damn you! You knew about this all along—" His fist comes up as if he's going to smash me right where I lay, but Nanette says one thing sharp and short in French and he stops.

Lydia, who's till then just dumb like the mop she's still holding, breaks into sobs that's dry and hard. They come from way down somewheres, and just listening hurts me.

"He—he can't—do—nothing!" she breaks out. But Nanette kisses her a half a dozen times, and does her best to quiet her.

"Now look here!" I says, seeing something's going to bust right quick. "You, Eric Smithback! That periscope notion of yours maybe is worth something and maybe it ain't. Here's my

proposition. I gotta have a new truck driver delivering shoes for me from my stores. That's your job and you get thirty-five a week outa it. Twenty-five is what you're paid for the work, and ten goes on as payment for your periscope. Besides, you get these!" And I flashes the two checks for five hundred apiece I had all ready. "One of these takes her"—and I motions to Lydia—"to some hospital and pays the bills for what's coming to her leg. If it needs more'n five hundred to do the job I'll help out. The other one fixes up you and Nanette *provided* you agrees to live in Lydia's home *with her*. If that ain't good enough you just see that you make it good enough. Outa this I get about a fourth interest in your periscope, after paying for the patents and so on. Is it a go?"

Eric opens his mouth once or twice, and I sees he's having a hard time keeping his Adam's apple in the right place. Then, without even so much as shaking me by the hand, he takes those blue slips, looks a second at Nanette and his mother, and then stalks over to Lydia. Lit'ing her just as tender as if all of a sudden she was likely to break, he walks straight outa the room and down the corridor toward the elevator.

Nanette watches after him, kinda astonished. Then, like a flash, she's bending over the bed, them brown eyes so full they splash on to the spread. "He—he ees come back," she says, and there's a little catch in her voice that don't hurt its loveliness none. "He ees come back and thank you—dear old man!" And then she bent down quick for a hug and a kiss that pretty nearly paid me up in full for being thought an antique.



The Versatile Vamp

By Howard Philip Rhoades

Author of "The Big Jump," "Her Matinée Idol" etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR PERARD

How Vivian Daw "got across"—an amusing story of the stage.

VIVIAN DAW was like the girl of the perennial newspaper story who wipes the grime off her fingers to open the letter saying she has fallen heir to fifty thousand dollars—she hardly believed it was true.

Yet, here was a young man with gray-topped shoes and a silk shirt like a stick of candy informing her that she was to open to-night at the Regal, sacred to the crowned heads of American vaudeville.

This, after birth in a hamlet so small it was known by two names, a baptism of oaths incident to learning dancing as it is done only in burlesque, three-a-day trouping out of Chicago with coal cinders strained through sleeping-car screens and ice off the top of pitchers in hotels as the only diet.

This, after three years in the sort of places where the Easterner looks twice to see if the man on the horse is Bill Hart or just one of the town boys; years in which face lotions fought irregular living to save a skin which in dark hours she feared Broadway never would see; years during which she always was busy with her little black notebook trying to better her act.

After these years—success!

"Sure," said the young man, whisking the ashes from his cigarette and looking down over Broadway as if he had been born between the subway kiosk and the Times Building, "you're made—if you get over."

Vivian was new to triumphs. She

didn't know they were like the well-known cloud with a silver lining—silver on one side but stormy on the other. Many a joker is not a joke. She began to sense as much as she said:

"That's true. I've got to get over."

"And you never can tell!" the man said. "Sometimes first-night crowds at the Regal are as warm as the asphalt along Fifth Avenue at two p. m. on August first, and as soft. Other times—oh, sweet petooty!—like the eye of an ex-Follies doll staring out of her limousine. You never can tell!"

"Wonder how it'll be to-night?"

"Well, I haven't heard of any delegation of Elks that would put you over on ball bearings, and there's no report of a superabundance of White Rats laying over to give you a professional razz."

"I guess there aren't any vaudeville people available or I wouldn't have been called," ventured Vivian.

"Not at all. The boss got two very good letters on you from the West. There's always dozens around trying to get on for a week at the Regal, but you can bet we hand pick them. Sorry the boss isn't around, but he said if you came in to give you the note and tell you to go ahead. You won't be able to make the matinée?"

"I'm afraid not. You see my trunk was delayed, and——"

"That's all right. You can rehearse this morning."

"I'm so glad of the chance," she said. "Tell him I'll do my best."

"We're for you, sister," said the booking agent's young man, as he tapped a cigarette on the desk. "The way is a trifle hard, but once you get over, all you got to do is pick the weakest of the old millionaires and chortle, 'Oh, Chalmers, this is so sudden!'"

"I've brought along the photo," said Vivian, unwrapping a picture.

"Good! Sorry we couldn't get you advance stuff in the newspapers and on the billboards, but when you're filling in for a canceled act this late, about the best we can do is to put your picture in a lobby frame and leave you to the critics."

"I'm going to make them say something nice," she smiled.

"Go to it, sister! I hope you knock them off their seats."

Vivian went around to the stage door of the big theater for a rehearsal in her street dress. Away from the metropolis, with its rush and coldness, the little act which she had cherished and built up, had seemed quite satisfying. But now, in this great, dim theater, it seemed to fall flat. The musicians were in a hurry to get away for lunch. The flyman was out, and she sang with a yawning void behind which made her voice sound thin and strident. She was alone, unattended and unheeded when she walked out, feeling very small, to a late lunch. This cheered her a little, and she strove to forget what was ahead in her afternoon of obtaining a lodging and making sure of the delivery of her trunks.

If she was feeling still a little dubious and fearful, late that afternoon such attitude changed as she found herself in front of the Regal. Here was a sight to restore her wavering morale. A man with a brush was carefully lettering upon the only remaining space in a glistening roster of acts, "Vivian Daw, the Sweet Zephyr from the West."

The sweet zephyr from the West

watched, thrilled, as the man who for the first time sees his name in the paper. She seemed to see herself progressing from the time she was one of the "and others" on a weather-beaten billboard in Red Corners, Michigan, to her present high estate. The zephyr for a long time was so entranced that she did not "blow."

Yet soon she had to, having gained the notice of men, as the lone woman always does who stands for long in New York. This gave her an idea. To make sure, she took out her purse as she strolled south and inspected her exchequer. She had a two and a five-dollar bill.

She smiled to herself as she walked—and then to the world. Against a building a little farther south, watching Broadway go by, was a rather vividly dressed man with an appearance which a clothing salesman would have described as snappy, and with a visage which would have inspired the person who revels in trying to determine which animal people resemble, to say he looked like a parrot.

The latter description, of course, is rather impressionistic. Yet there was something about his hooked nose, his sharp eyes beneath glistening nose glasses, his underdone chin, and the set of his green tie and yellow shirt which needed little imagination to place him in the Psittaci family.

It was not for Vivian Daw to deny this natty individual a smile. And it was not for this gentleman, who unmistakably never had had any tags marked "Apollo Belvedere" hung upon him, to overlook her smile. He started in pursuit. Now he passed her with a nifty smile.

There are smiles that—well, they get people together. A block farther south the polly gentleman proved to be a regular fellow. He inquired where she would like to eat. Vivian was reasonable. She steered him to a place

close by where American foods with French names were served in a five-course succession at one dollar and fifty.

"This is a fine place!" her escort pronounced. "I've never tried it."

"That's the way with New Yorkers," said Vivian blandly. "They don't get around as much as people who come here from out of town."

At the outset her host displayed his dashing bravery. He had the courage to tell the truth.

"Then you *are* on the stage," he said. "I was pretty sure you were. Peggy de Motte that's with the 'Million Dollar Kids,'—do you know her? Ha-ha," he laughed, "I got her picture down at the store where nobody sees it but me."

"I was out there in September, two years ago."

"Guess I was at the Eagles' convention then. Went clear to the coast that time."



"About the best we can do is to put your picture in a lobby frame and leave you to the critics."

"I'm not a New Yorker," he said. "Of course," he hastened to qualify, "I might as well be. I'm over here three or four days every year buying."

"You're *not* a New Yorker!" she marveled.

"I know I look it. You see, I'm over here so much attending to the firm's business. I'm the secretary," he said, as he passed over a card.

Vivian saw that he was Mr. Asa Hornbeck.

"From Tuckertown, Indiana," she commented. "I've played that town."

"Maybe," said Vivian, as the waiter took off the relish plates and brought a huge tureen of soup. "Your business is a department store?"

"Yes, the Bazaar's the big store. Mr. Barlow—that's the president—is a pretty old man. He wouldn't dare to come over here. That's why they send me. It won't be a great many more years before I buy out the rest of the store. Likely by the time I'm forty the Bazaar will belong to me."

"Then maybe you'll sell, and go to a larger place like New York."

He shook his head, although she could see the suggestion pleased him.

"No," he said with resignation, "I guess I'll stay back in the old town. Of course, it is slow. Often I've wished I had somebody who was—well, more like they are over here."

"You might come over here and get you a wife," she suggested demurely.

Mr. Hornbeck flushed.

"Well, I'm married," he admitted. "But you see my wife she's interested more in sewing circles and missionary work. She's never understood me."

"Well, you certainly have broad views," said Vivian. "And you're not afraid. Right out on Broadway you flirt with the girls."

"They call me 'Outspoken Asey' back home," he said. "They say I ain't afraid to speak out in meetin' anywhere. Last year I got up right in city council and bawled out a councilman that was holding back on repaving our street. The firm started sending me over here because they knew I wouldn't stand for any funny business."

"I can see you are a man who will stand up for his rights."

"You bet your bottom jitney," he continued. "And it ain't only at home. Down at Goldman's this morning a smart salesman was trying to hand it to me, and I called his bluff. I went in and told old Goldman himself, even if he did have an officeful around him."

Mr. Hornbeck's recital was delivered with the roast course, and soon afterward Vivian seemed occupied with some problem. By the time the pink, white, and brown ice cream and the black coffee came, she was looking before she leaped—looking covertly and searchingly.

Her capacity to listen to the exploits of Asa Hornbeck, of how he dominated his own town and stood in no fear of Manhattan the Awesome, diminished with her desire for food—also her time until the opening at the Regal.

"I'd sure like to see you some more," said Asa. "Can't we go somewhere to-night?"

"I don't know about this evening," she parried. "If you'll excuse me I'll go telephone."

"But you'll promise to go to-night," urged Asa, holding her hand. "I think you're just a little sweetie."

Vivian noted it was a quarter to eight. She was fourth on the bill! Hornbeck was holding her hand resolutely. She took the diplomatic way and said fervently:

"You know I will, Mr. Hornbeck."

"Asey," he corrected softly.

"Sure, Asey," she said.

"All right, then. I'll leave you go," and he watched as she hurried upstairs.

Vivian knew the ins and outs of this restaurant, situated in an old, converted brownstone dwelling house—especially the outs! There was a door on the second floor through which one could slip into a hallway, and thence down the front steps to the street. She had no hesitation in so doing. She was needed at the theater at once. Asa Hornbeck belonged to that sex which traditionally settles bills. One more or less is nothing in a lifetime.

So she chuckled as she hurried toward the Regal. She had originally planned for something which would pass for a meal and cost sixty cents. Decidedly a dollar and a half table d'hôte is to be sniffed at!

But her chuckling stopped as she passed the great lobby of the Regal. Even her name on the glistening roster and her photograph quite near the street did not cheer her. The lobby was jammed with long lines of people buying tickets. They composed the audiences which, as the agent's young man said, were warm or otherwise.

Back on the stage the temperature was still lower. A stage hand did not turn his head as he directed her to her dressing room. From "out front,"

although the house was filled, came no such impatient hum as one hears in the provinces where the theater is an event and every actor "gets a hand."

Matters did not improve after the curtain rose. Vivian was dressed in time to see the disgusted faces of two acrobats who toiled hard and raised nothing more than a copious perspiration.

"Prohibition is gettin' this country's goat," grunted a half-friendly "props" beside her. "They sit and look with faces like the road to Tipperary."

The condition that he pointed out, rather than his explanation, clung to Vivian as the next act moved on. In it were a pair of girls who sang sweetly but created no enthusiasm. So with the third act, a beautiful dancing turn, seriously artistic but lacking power to win applause.

When Vivian saw such acts as these fall upon that critical sea with hardly a ripple, she felt like a lady called upon to make a charming appearance just after washing her hair. But this was no way! She must give her act, and *make* them like it. A bit of the exultation she felt when she had been given the engagement, came back. She could. She would!

Now the street along which she was to sing, came down from the flies. Now the spotlight came over to meet her. Now she was starting. Now or never!

Her first song was about a little Alaskan girl who comes down to Broadway and becomes queen of the shimmy because of her ability to shiver and shake. There was a ripple. She was encouraged. She put more spirit into her second number, a sentimental piece about the dear old gate over which a lad kissed a girl as he went away to war. It fell flat. A little monologue. The house brightened. But the impression was superficial. Pretty sure that she was never cut out

for a Broadway star she danced off to prepare for the high point in her act.

Now she was back in a clinging dress of black through which her limbs peeped daintily forth. Her dark hair was drawn back sharply and, dropping over her ears in glistening folds, framed her chic little face. She was smiling, and interwoven with her smile were the wiles of the enchantress. In her light step and slender form were introduced the feminine undulation fatal to the male. Vivian was supposed to be a vampire.

After a verse relating how she had lured males from the day when she had coaxed their lollypops away from the boys until the present when she had to maintain an auditing department to keep track of the men she had ruined, she went into the chorus:

I vamp 'em and I lure 'em
And I make 'em cry for more;
I tease 'em and I squeeze 'em
But make them leave me at the door!

It was a song of a popular sort, cleverly sung. Her costume was stunning. She was putting the very best of her ability into it. But it didn't get over. The house showed no enthusiasm. It was surfeited with pretty things and music. This Vivian didn't realize. She knew only that she had laid before the public her rarest gifts and it was looking back at her like a scene on a Christmas post card.

Well, to sing the chorus again and get off. She would have her lone week on Broadway. Then back to the tall timber! She started the song again like one who is walking regretfully down from a high place where he has had a splendid but fleeting vision. She sang the chorus, was about to repeat it merely to fill out her allotted time, when at the back of the house something caught her attention. A confusion, of such nature as to make her stop and with the rest of the house look back, was traveling toward the stage.

Now she saw that the confusion's author was a man. Then she saw what man it was. Quite close to the stage, hat in hand, his parrotlike appearance accentuated by excitement, was Asa Hornbeck.

"What did you mean by running away from that restaurant?" he demanded, deadily in earnest.

Vivian, who once or twice had been heckled in small Western theaters, never had been under such fire as this. She blushed redder than her paint and sought in a confused way for words. Asa Hornbeck, however, escaped such embarrassment.

"I leave it to you folks," he said, addressing himself to the audience, "asking you if it's right when a feller takes a girl out and buys her a supper to run away and leave him?"

The audience which had been, chuckling ever since Asa appeared now was disposed to laugh. The greatest wave of merriment of the whole performance welled up. Faces too long bored and those mildly interested began to smile, and looks darted between companions as when something pleases. That audience had been starving for something funny. Here it was!

And in the great moment Vivian Daw rose to the situation. Her first feeling was that the appearance of Asa was a final and crowning piece of misfortune. But when that broad, genuine wave of merriment appeared she saw in it the herald of her opportunity.

Quickly she went into the part of a gay little deceiver caught with the goods and trying to pacify her accuser. With such broad strokes and impromptu grimaces and poses as she could command, she went into it with all she was worth.

"I couldn't stay," she explained. "There was a fellow outside with an automobile."

"Leastways he only brought you this far," said Asa. "And if I hadn't of



"You shouldn't have sent in your card, but your bank book," Vivian retorted, as the house roared over Asa's injured look.

gone by and seen your picture in front of the theayter, I wouldn't ever of knowed. I didn't think actresses was as fickle as they say."

"We fluctuate with the stock market," she said gayly.

"Well, if you remember, I got a date with you," he said. "I sent in my card around at the stage door, but a feller there said if I wanted to see you I better buy a ticket."

"You shouldn't have sent in your card, but your bank book," Vivian retorted, as the house roared over Asa's injured look.



"Where I come from," said Asa, against an ever-growing merriment, "if you take a girl out——"

"Where do you come from?" Vivian demanded, as the laughter subsided.

"You know," he said. "Tuckertown, Indiana."

"Tuckertown, Indiana!" she cried. "Well, Mr. Hornbeck, *this* is Broadway!"

"That don't make no difference," insisted Asa, when he could make himself heard. "I'm goin' to be round at the stage door awaiting for you."

"But, Asey," she said. "I can't see you. I've got to go out with my dear daddee!"

"Daddy, the deuce!" he cried. "I don't think you have any paw. I'll be waiting."

He was beginning to retreat up the aisle.

"Oh, Asey," she teased, "come here a minute. I want to tell you something."

"You quit your kidding me!" he cried. "I won't either."

"Asey—oh, Asey!"

"I'll be at the stage door!" he shouted

from the rear of the house. "I'll be waiting—at the stage door!" This as he disappeared through the foyer amid a gale of laughter.

Grimacing slyly, Vivian Daw held her audience in the grip of an actor who has fascinated. Then she burst into peals of the heartiest laughter. Holding her sides drolly, she paced back and forth with shrieks of hysterical merriment. In reality she was crying with joy. But the audience didn't know. It just laughed—and laughed!

At last Vivian looked down at the orchestra leader and signaled for the last verse of her song. As the merriment finally died down she started to sing. There was a new note now, one of ease and confidence. She went over with the impact of a "sure-fire" headliner. Encore—another verse—the chorus again, and again! At last exit—crying through her smiles!

There was a man she had not seen before awaiting her. He was the circuit manager who chuckled:

"They said there was something funny coming off back here—and I'll say there was! That was the most natural plant I ever saw. You sure did surprise everybody!"

"I wanted it for such a surprise that I didn't even do it at rehearsal," she prevaricated.

"And the best part was in not having him join you on the stage," said the manager. "That rear exit is what made it. Clever fellow you've got there, too. Just like the real thing!"

"Yes," she admitted, starting toward her dressing room.

"With two in the act," he said confidentially, "you'll need to see me about a better figure. We'll be glad to add whatever you pay him."

"Yes," she said. "I thought——"

"Whatever's right," he said. "See me in the morning. I'm glad somebody went out there and waked them up. Count on another week here before you start on the subway time."

Vivian knew she was good for whatever advance she might ask in the morning, so she decided to take no chances. She was dressed for the street in a jiffy. With an eloquent gesture she called aside the property man who earlier in the evening had spoken of the passing of mirth.

"Listen," she said. "Outside is a man looking for Miss Daw. I won't see him and I don't want him ever to come back. Treat him kindly, but be persuasive. Also, forget you ever saw him, and that I ever spoke to you about him!"

Her five-dollar bill slid into the hand of the stage man. Then, by a circuitous route through the other side of the house, she made another get-away. A swift walk and she was at the office of the daily which all the actor folks read.

She wrote on a blank. Then she gave the paper to a young man at a window marked "Classified Advertisements."

"Read it back," she said, "so I see if you have it right."

He read:

"Help wanted, male. Wanted: By nine o'clock this morning, capable character actor who can make up bald, with glasses, to look like parrot, and imitate speech of small-town man, to assist in vaudeville. Vivian Daw, the Bryden, West Forty-eighth street."

Vivian nodded and paid.

"Now," she said to herself, sitting down in a corner and drawing her little note book, "to get it down just as we said it before I forget."





WHAT THE STARS SAY

by Madame Renée Longuille

HOW TO READ YOUR OWN HOROSCOPE

LESSON II.

CENTURIES ago, it is said, the old astrologers cleverly divided their maps of the heavens into twelve equal parts in order to simplify their work. These divisions were called *houses*, and each one represented a different phase of life. Although there are never two natiivities or maps alike, the positions of these "houses" never change. As the planets move on through the heavens, their influence is felt in that phase of life or "special house" represented, which is governed by them at the hour of birth.

The whole circle is divided into three hundred and sixty degrees, and each "house" is allotted just thirty degrees. The first division, or spoke, of this great wheel is located at the left-hand side of the circle, midway between top and bottom. It runs straight across the circle, dividing it into halves, and forming a line that may be called the *horizon*. Each half is divided into six equal parts, making twelve in all, of which the first, just below the horizon, at the left, is the most important.

This house—the house of life—represents the looks, character, mentality, and inherited tendencies of the subject, and corresponds in a way to the sign Aries. Thus, if one of the planets is found in this position at the moment of birth, it will cast its good or evil influ-

ence on everything which this house stands for. The face and head are ruled by this division of the chart. If, for instance, the planet Mars were found poised here, the native would surely have a scar, mole, or some imperfection on the head or face. But, on the other hand, if Venus, the planet of beauty, happened to influence this portion of the map, dimples would take the place of disfigurements. Any planet affecting this division of the nativity will be sure to play an important part in the native's whole life.

Working toward the right, on the chart, the next sector of the circle—the house of money—represents the money and personal property which the subject is likely to have. This house corresponds to the sign Taurus. It rules the neck and throat. Any benefic planet found in this part of the heavens at birth is sure to bring the native money or wealth. An evil start will have the reverse effect. All money conditions will be indicated here, either by the nature of the zodiacal sign on the line—corresponding to a radius and called the *cusp*—or by any planet in the house.

The third division or house—the house of kindred—denotes brothers and sisters, short journeys, and letters. It corresponds, in a way, to Gemini. A

planet situated in this house will have a strong influence on the mind.

The fourth house—the house of the father—represents the father, and foretells as well the native's own condition at the close of life. The "home" sign, Cancer, corresponds to this house. This is an important part of the chart to study.

The fifth is the so-called "house of children." The fortune of the native in betting, racing, or speculating is indicated here, as well as love affairs before marriage and all emotions of the heart. This is the natural house of the heart sign, Leo.

The sixth house—the house of sickness—is often termed the "hospital of the zodiac," for this part of the map and its indications foretell the diseases and sicknesses, the health and strength of the subject. A fortunate star, placed in this house, protects the health; a malefic one brings affliction, the nature of which may be determined by the sign of the zodiac which happens to fall on the cusp, and by consideration of that part of the body which is ruled by the same sign. Virgo corresponds to this house.

The seventh is the house of marriage, and in it the wife or husband, as well as business partners, are indicated. This division will also reveal open enemies and public difficulties in life. Libra is the natural sign of this house.

The eighth is the house of death. Here will be indicated the kind of death which the native is likely to experience, and also conditions connected with or caused by deaths, such as wills, legacies, or insurance policies. Here, also, the subject may discover the monetary condition of husband or wife. In a way, this house is identified with the sign Scorpio.

The ninth house—the house of religion—represents the higher mind of the individual. Here, also, long voyages are proclaimed. Note, in this connec-

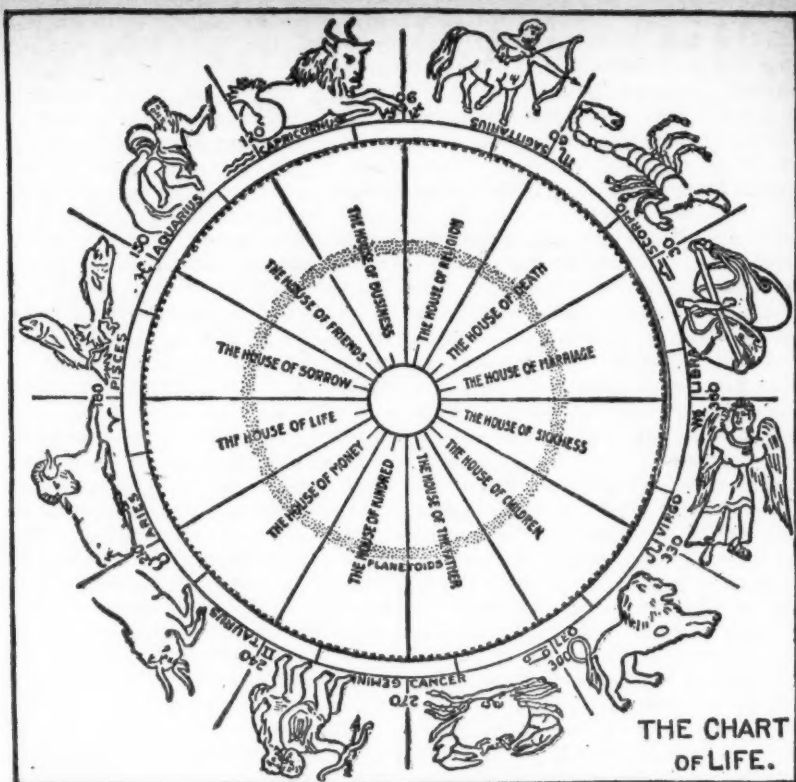
tion, that "short" journeys are revealed in the part of the map exactly opposite—that is, in the third house. This ninth house governs religion and dreams. Any planet poised here will stamp its nature very strongly on the mind. Sagittarius is the sign corresponding to this house.

The employment, profession, honor, or dishonor can be predicted by studying the tenth house, the house of business. It will often tell something of the position of the mother and the influence she will have on the native, his life, and prospects. Capricorn is the natural sign.

The eleventh house—the house of friends—represents the friends, hopes, and desires. Acquaintances will always correspond to the nature of any star found in this house. It corresponds, in a way, to the sign Aquarius.

The last division, or twelfth house—the house of sorrow—is next to the first, and completes the circle. Sorrows, limitations, and many disappointments in life will be shown in this division. Secret enemies are indicated here. The sign Pisces corresponds to this house.

Although every house is of some special importance, their individual influences naturally vary in strength. It is interesting to note that the principal phases of life are represented by the four angles of the horoscope—namely, the first house, that of life and character; the fourth, representing the home or environment surrounding the native; the seventh, treating of the husband or wife; the tenth, showing the honor and position acquired or built up by personal effort. Thus it can be readily seen how any planet in any one of these four houses would have an exceptionally strong influence on the native's life, as compared with its effect if situated in a less important part of the map. For example, a planet in the seventh house, telling of the future husband



or wife, is sure to be more vital than one found in the third house, affecting short journeys.

Such, then, is the nature of the twelve houses. And on this rough outline or structure all calculations are based.

We shall next consider the signs of the zodiac. Although these never change their order of succession on the map, from cusp to cusp, from Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces, the horoscope or first house may start on any degree of any one of these signs. They will then cast their particular character on that phase of life which the house repre-

sents. This is an important step in the development of a map of life.

The different houses derive their character from the signs which, in the chart, fall on them. Although any one of these twelve signs may fall on the first house or horizon, Aries is termed the "natural sign." The nature and character of the fiery sign Aries is impulse, ambition, force, and enthusiasm; so that, when found on the cusp of this particular house, it lends its active ways to that part of life which the first house deals with. Aries, found on the first dividing line of the circle, representing the ascendant, the native's life, looks, and character, would take on the

influence of this energetic sign. Thus, the importance of this part of the zodiac can be readily seen. When the native's character is impulsive, fiery, and active, it is easy to understand that these traits have their effect on all other houses or conditions of life. For instance, the short journeys indicated by the third house would necessarily be taken suddenly and probably occur more frequently. That is, the special character of an Aries native must be taken into consideration, no matter what other sign may be on the cusp to influence the short journeys.

In judging each house, of any horoscope, the influence of the first must always be kept in mind, as showing the real character of the native and the way he would be apt to act under any circumstances. This assumption argues that "character is destiny." The appearance is apt to coincide with the disposition, and a native with this cardinal, airy sign on the house of "looks" or ascendant, would naturally be rather slight in build, because great activity is not conducive to superfluous weight. The limbs would, however, be strong and active. The hair is generally of a coarse, wiry, or unruly texture, the eyes not large, but always sharp and quick to see everything. Large, beautiful, quiet eyes must be left for the natures that are less active. This is the sign of the Ram and its ruler is the planet Mars.

Assuming that the earthly sign Taurus, instead of Aries, lent its color to this house, the character would then be secretive, stubborn, and retentive. Great enthusiasm would be found only where "self" was concerned. Eager-

ness for money and the goods of this world would probably be the outstanding trait. The physical type, as the name of the sign suggests, is one more or less stocky, thick-set, with a short, strong neck and big, generous features. The hair is almost always dark and sometimes nearly black, and often curls on top of the head. A female born under this sign will be more favored in appearance, but the coloring and character will be the same. This sign is symbolized by the Bull and is ruled by the planet Venus.

The airy, mutable sign, Gemini, on the horizon or ascendant, shows a more agreeable, winning character. Intellect is foremost in this sign, and the brain is capable of much work. The character is apt to be dual and difficult to gauge, sometimes expressing itself in a quick change of mood, from steady soberness to light gayety. Reading will always be a source of pleasure to these natives, but whether or not the intellect will assimilate the knowledge depends on the map of life as a whole. Whereas an intemperate eater or drinker might well be a native of the preceding sign, Taurus, just the opposite type, may be looked for when this brainy, humane sign, Gemini, colors the character or first house. The only hope for complete worldly success for this type of person lies in repose and concentration, which will overcome the love of change and diffusiveness so strongly marked in these characters and which is their great handicap.

The physical type of this sign is apt to be slim and rather tall, with long, thin hands and fingers. The Twins symbolize this sign. Mercury is the ruler.



Climbing Love Hill

By Iva Whitman Robinson

Author of "Declined for Reasons," "Cupid Bridges Broadway," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. A. FURMAN

Married in haste—misunderstanding, jealousy, misery. But the ending is heart-warming enough.

I'M afraid,"—young Mrs. Craig prodded a slice of lemon with a meditative teaspoon—"I'm really afraid Friend Husband's going to lose his blonde."

She made the announcement casually, but a certain visioning look in the blue eyes caused her guest to put down her teacup and exclaim apprehensively:

"Now, Nancy! Surely you're not thinking of doing it *again*?"

"Why not, Saint Margaret? You're behind the times; in this progressive age an aspiring woman is always looking for the man higher up."

"And where, pray," said Miss Merwin, her voice warm with indignation, "do you expect to find one truly higher up than your husband?"

"Well, an aviator, now," Mrs. Craig returned frivolously. "Isn't he considerably above a mining man?"

"I see. So Mr. Colfax is being considered as the next lessee of your affections." Margaret Merwin's usually level tones were accented with scorn as she continued: "You'll neglect no maneuver of eyes and dimples in your platonic philanderings, and then how surprised you'll be when——"

"The birdman begs me to fly with him! Cheer up, old dear; maybe he isn't vulnerable, in spite of those eyelashes."

"I might have known it; he's handsome, and a novelty. I suppose a wholesome, outdoor man with a definite aim in life is a refreshing change

from the vapid, smoke-cured café frequenters you've had hanging about you." A passionate light leaped to Miss Merwin's eyes and an unwonted color flamed in the smooth pallor of her cheeks. "I wish for his own sake as well as for Martin's that he had smashed himself up in one of his abominable machines before he ever came up to the mountain. As it is, three people are headed for disaster, it's—sickening! Aren't you ever going to get enough? Why can't you let one splendid man alone, for the sake of another?"

Although Mrs. Craig's lips had not lost their debonair smile, her face had paled slightly, and noting this, her guest leaned forward impulsively and caged the fluttering white fingers between her own firm, warm palms.

"Forgive me, dear. I should not have spoken to you so, but I cannot bear to have Martin hurt."

"Suppose we say embarrassed, instead," Mrs. Craig suggested. "These minor operations of the law are not really painful, you know, and think of the relief of the matrimonial patient once the offending member is removed. Now I have the courage born of experience, but, of course, it may be a bit embarrassing for Martin, the first time he has to appear before a judge with his emotions in negligee."

"It would mean more than embarrassment, Nancy; it would hurt Martin sorely to lose you. He loves you deeply,

I know, in spite of his absorption in his work, and his—brusqueness. Your husband isn't perfect——"

"Really?" said Mrs. Craig in a soft, throaty drawl.

"Your husband isn't perfect," Miss Merwin continued steadily, "but he is fine and honorable and clean-living. And normally, he is sweet-natured and generous to a fault. I've known him since our kindergarten days. His sisters are like my own, and he——"

"I know; it is natural that you should take his part." Young Mrs. Craig suspected that something warmer than sisterly affection for her morose Martin had once stirred Miss Merwin's heart. Perhaps that was why her crisp flippancies so often softened into gentleness under her guest's quiet eyes. "You're a dear, Saint Margaret, and Martin is lucky to have you for a champion, only—I wish somebody could see my side, too."

"Dear child, I see it. I said that *normally* Martin is sweet-natured and generous. I admit that since he married you he has not been even just. The responsibility for your hasty marriage rests chiefly upon him, and if, through his impetuosity, he invited unhappiness, he should accept it manfully. I admit all that. But, Nancy, you—oh, my dear, it's cowardly to give up so soon. Only eighteen months, and after all, there is no real trouble, no legitimate excuse for backing out of your bargain."

"I suppose it is nothing," Martin's wife cried stormily, "oh, nothing at all, to be perched up on this idiot mountain in an imbecile mining camp, with Martin away all day and only a Mexican maid for company. I nearly died of it before you came to visit us. Nowhere to go, nothing to do, nobody to dress up for. Martin is so afraid of catering to my 'vulgar wanity'—with a grimace—that he wouldn't notice my clothes if I appeared at dinner in a hula

dancer's grass skirt and a Salvation Army bonnet."

Nancy couldn't be angry long; it wasn't in her.

"Why, I thought I heard him just the other night, commenting upon your gorgeousness in that rose and silver frock."

"Yea, verily. He knew that John Colfax was coming to dinner, and that was his way of warning me that Hon. Husband was on the job. I mustn't attempt to beguile our guest with my sassy coiffure and my flashy 'cabariment'; naughty, naughty!"

"But, Nancy, after all you cannot blame——"

"I *do* blame him! I'm prettier now than I was the first night he saw me. And two trunks full of musical-comedy undresses, and the combination going to waste! Why won't he notice me himself, if he is so determined that nobody else shall? More tea?" She set the teapot down with a sloppy bang.

"But no; I might as well have one eye and two noses, for all the admiration I get from him. And I, the 'Blond Beauty of the Coast Cabarets!' If only he'd let me go back to Los Angeles to work until the mine begins to produce, then we could leave things to a manager and live like civilized people. But I simply won't stay up here, with nothing on earth to do!"

"You have voiced the real trouble, Nancy. You have nothing to do, and in consequence you are restless and discontented. That's why you can't leave John Colfax in peace, with his experiments and his aeroplanes. That's why you are determined that he shall teach you aeronautics, and take you on flights, in defiance of your husband's wishes. There is nothing else to occupy you. If only"—Miss Merwin hesitated—"I wish you had a baby or two, for ballast."

Nancy shook her curls decisively.

"We don't have babies in our family!"

She lifted her head with a quick, birdlike movement as a swift patter of hoofbeats sounded on the mountain road. "Here's milord, now!" she announced, and a moment later Martin Craig was tying his horse near the veranda rail and greeting the two women at the little tea table.

Nancy eyed her husband speculatively as he ascended the steps. How handsome he was, she thought resentfully, in his corduroy and puttees, with his warm brown eyes and his tawny hair. But—please him by telling him that she thought so, and he more chary of compliments every day? Hardly!

"Welcome, honest workingman," said she with an expressive survey of his dusty garments. "You look—er—

just advising that we promote an infant industry."

Miss Merwin flushed delicately, but remained silent.

"But I tell her," continued Nancy, "that I have only one figure to my name and you have only four to your bank book, so we can't afford to waste



She had seemed to the man of sagebrush and cactus like a bit of Eden-bloom—flower-fragrant, heaven-sweet.

rather fagged. Have some tea with the pretty ladies?"

"Thank you, no. I'm afraid I wouldn't fit in the picture. Besides," he continued, with a cynical smile at nothing in particular, "I fancy you'd like to be left to finish your interrupted conversation. I suppose it was—theatrical?"

"Nope, obstetrical," replied Nancy outrageously. "Saint Margaret was

our substance on riotous offspring. My sole maternal yearning is for a nice fat 'war baby' or two—husky twins, say, like Swedish Shipping and Consolidated Copper."

"Still harping on that string, eh?" Thus Martin, disagreeably. "Lord, you women! The 'gentler sex' standing in line at War's bargain counter! I want money; the mine needs it; but when it comes to profiting by the greatest catas-

trophe the world has even known, there's where I quit cold!"

"How noble!" breathed Nancy, eyes piously uprolled. "Still uncontaminated, after eighteen months! But I'm really afraid it wouldn't be safe for your immortal soul to be exposed to me much longer. For the sake of your spiritual health I've about decided—oh, you break it to him, Saint Margaret; I'm going to brave the bandit in her kitchen and tell her I've invited a guest to dinner."

But Miss Merwin, with a gesture of distressed negation, rose to follow her hostess indoors.

"Colfax again, of course?"

Nancy paused to nod cheerfully from the doorway.

"Well, may I request that you wear something more than that pink dress you treated him to last week? His line is *aéronautics*, not anatomy, you know."

"Have you a little Anthony Comstock in your home?" Mrs. Craig affably inquired of her guest. "All right, Martin Luther, we'll sidestep damnation by dining in a 'roughneck' sweater, yes? And now I'll hurry and warn Sis' Villa or she'll serve the leg of lamb without dressing. Absolutely *no* morals, that woman!"

Left to himself, Martin Craig surrendered to the troubled thoughts that so often met and vanquished him. He was a fool, he told himself wearily, a nature faker who hadn't known a wild canary from a domestic fowl. Why *not* open the door and let his captive fly back to her native haunts, there to preen her gay feathers and trill her gay songs? If it were only his hurt, she should go, by Heaven! but he knew how many hawks menace the canary's golden flight.

With eyes narrowed to points of amber light, he visioned his first meeting with the little singer whom he had married after a tempestuous wooing of ten dreamlike days. Newly arrived

from his desert claim he had entered a Spring Street café, avid for all it had to offer of good food, correct service, lights, music, laughter. Alternately buoyed up by hope and beaten down by discouragements, he had put in seven months of grilling work, seven months of heat, sand, and general desolation. What wonder that the contrast rendered him light of head and light of foot, and that he had danced down the primrose path, the little singer's fingers laced in his own?

It had been all up with him from the moment when her guileless forget-me-not gaze met his. Stepping upon the little platform opposite his table she had tilted back her head deliciously and tossed her song into the air like a jet of pure water spangled with sunlight. In her frock of white, so filmy that it looked like something a fairy might have dreamed about a cobweb, with a spray of snowy honeysuckle between her fingers, she had seemed to the man of sagebrush and cactus like a bit of Eden-bloom—flower fragrant, heaven-sweet.

The next night found him at the same table—palpitant, waiting. And when she appeared, it was in a swirl of smoke-gray chiffon over eddying ruffles colored like a conflagration—flaring yellow, vivid rose, glowing crimson. With body as lilting as her voice, she had swayed to the music and tilted back her head deliciously and wooed:

"Behold Love's torch burning!
Come near, I am yearning,
All others spurning,
I'm turning to you!"

Well, reflected Martin Craig cynically, his had not been the only heart melted and molded by that song, thus sung. The man who, the night before, had held reverently aloof, not aspiring to pluck the spray of Eden-bloom, now offered himself up as fuel for that fire incarnate.

How eager he had been to pursue; how willing, she, to be overtaken. All that the wooing lacked of deliberation it made up in intensity, and ten days after their first meeting these two emerged from a dim, old church, a new ring on the girl's finger, a new light in the man's eyes.

The days immediately following were wholly blissful. The little bride settled to her husband's arms as a bird to its bough, and all her plans for the future had a setting of song. Up in the mountains above Azusa, where the new claim from which Martin expected so much awaited them, there was a brown cabin tucked away among the live oaks and manzanita, and Nancy had already named it the Lark's Nest, in anticipation of good times coming.

It was not until a week after their marriage that the past obtruded itself, projecting its gray shadow into the gold of the future. Yielding to Nancy's wishes, her husband had reluctantly agreed that on the evening before leaving for the mountain they should give a little dinner for certain of "the crowd."

The traditions of austere New England were in Martin Craig's blood. Western carelessness but lightly overlaid Eastern convention. Hence, he felt an inward distaste for the vulgar, kindly crew to whom Nancy had so proudly presented him. But, he reflected, he could afford to be magnanimous for this one evening; to-morrow he would take her away from them all.

So he sat, a gay host at the gay table, while wine creamed in its crystal and roses flushed pinkly, sweetly imitative of the bridal blush. Then there came a lull in the gale of talk and laughter, and Larry Thorne, Nancy's one-time vaudeville partner, rose, goblet held high. He was a wonderful dancer, was Larry. His grim old father had once said of him: "No wonder he's a fool, his head has gone to his feet!" Perhaps

this was why, since he was not unkindly, he was never known to sacrifice wit to good taste. Certain it is that on the night in question he had reached the highest point of his trail of tactlessness.

"Let us drink," he proposed, "to the girl who adds the courts to courtships; to the intermittent matron, the matrimonial lightning-change artist! Here's to Nancy originally-Lane-later-Whitney - eventually - Carter - subsequently-Craig-ultimately-what?"

And, after one apprehensive instant, under the leadership of Nancy's light laughter, the toast was drunk, standing.

Martin wondered now, as he always did in looking back, how he had come through the remaining hours of that horrible evening. He felt again the sickening flop of his heart as it turned over in his breast, knew once more the outraged flare of his nostrils, and the anguished draining of color from his face as the staggering revelation came home to him.

A taxi, and an ominous calm; the apartment, and cataclysmic storm! She had not told him, Martin accused. He had never asked her, defended Nancy. There had been so brief a time between meeting and marriage. All their talk had been prophecy, not history. Unforgivable deceit, was Martin's arraignment; pardonable omission, Nancy's plea. Everybody else knew of those earlier, negligible husbands—why should she have supposed him ignorant?

But once started, she deluged him with details. At eighteen she had married Clarence Whitney, mentally and physically a weakling, and when, two years later, he had flaccidly succumbed to cigarettes and a cough, she had ordered his tombstone with one hand while she signed a theatrical contract with the other, and had fared forth, lonely, in quest of luck and laurels.

And she had *had* luck; a good bit of both kinds. Summer stock in Frisco,

then a winter cold in Portland, resulting in sapped strength and a purse drained by illness and idleness. Followed a successful vaudeville sketch, and a vivifying taste of the big time; then, illness again, and a perverted appendix left behind in a glass jar in Seattle. After that, the cabarets, where her beauty of face and voice had won her instant recognition, and at intervals, other hospitals, other doctors, more offerings laid upon the altar of medical research.

What wonder that she had trembled for the future, had been ready to listen to Glenn Carter's plea that he be given the right to take care of her? And at first—Nancy admitted it—she had thought that she loved him a little! His eyes had been dark and his tricks not in vain, and she had so needed comfort and support. But Glenn's love waned with the season, and in a few months the little blond bride found herself an outworn passion. Smoldering black eyes called him and he followed, and Nancy, shamed and disillusioned, sought her freedom.

Then Martin had found her in the Spring Street café, and she had loved him so. From the very first she had *loved*. But here Martin had raised a silencing hand. She would kindly spare him; he quite understood. She had decided to have a new husband sent home on approval; a mining man might prove a real bargain. And if not, he had told her with miserable eyes and a bitter twist of the lips, he supposed she would again "add the courts to courtship."

So the husband had smoked and the wife had sobbed the night away, and the next day, after a superficial reconciliation, they had come up to the little mountain home, hoping to win back a measure of happiness. But—no use dodging the fact—it hadn't worked out. The ever-recurring suspicion on Martin's part was met by an airy defiance which was all too successful in hiding

his wife's hurt, and cynicism and re-
crimination colored their days.

Martin rose with a heavy sigh. He must put up his horse, then bathe and dress. Perhaps if he hurried, there would be time for a talk with Margaret before Colfax arrived. She was so sane and clear-seeing, Margaret, and gentle as she was just. If Nancy really was contemplating a separation, Margaret must help him.

When he entered the little chintzhung bedroom an hour or so later, Nancy laid down a box of the rouge he detested and said blandly:

"Look, Martin; are my cheeks on straight?" It was thus that she sometimes relieved the tedium of a sluggish peace, but her husband, hitherto quick to resent the flouting of his wishes, ignored her challenge. Grave brown eyes met saucy blue ones in the mirror and then, with a hand on her shoulder, he turned her about and, stooping, laid gentle lips on hers.

"Why—why, *Martin!* Is this Labor Day or something? What are we celebrating?" But a tremor in her voice belied the scoffing words.

"Nancy girl," said Martin, drawing her closer, "we're making a beastly mess of life! Don't you suppose we can pull up? Before we go to sleep to-night, let's thresh things out. There's no time now; Colfax has come. Margaret and I walked down the trail to meet him, and Margaret—well, she's been lecturing me. According to her, I've been a suspicious, sulky devil!

"Yes, that sounds exactly like Saint Margaret," glibed Nancy softly.

"Oh, well—you know. It seems I've been too quick to criticize and too slow to praise. She says that because I got that blow between the eyes I've been seeing things crooked ever since, and that if I would make more allowances and demand fewer she's sure we could pull together; instead of pulling apart. Nancy, let's *try*, dear!"

If Nancy was swift at reprisal she was no less quick with concession, and now she matched her husband's chastened mood with one of generous surrender. When, finally, they blew out the tall candles upon the dressing table and clung together for a moment in the fragrant darkness, in each heart there was the hope that the state of armed neutrality was safely passed and that a permanent peace was to be theirs.

An atmosphere of quiet cheer pervaded the little room where the Craigs and their two guests lingered at the pretty table with its shaded lights and its masses of mariposa lilies. Margaret Merwin's heart sang within her. Surely, she thought, happier times were on the way for the man who was her lifelong friend and the girl whom she loved but could not comprehend. Already her talk had helped.

Nancy's restless sparkle had softened to a lambent glow, and in her husband's manner there was unwonted warmth as he encouraged John Colfax to dilate upon the subject nearest his heart. After all, Martin mused, Colfax was a mighty likable chap. It wasn't *his* fault that Nancy had deviled him into a mild flirtation because the man whose business it was to feed her love of love had kept her on short rations. Was it likely that an inventor who had already rendered his government notable service and who had sought this isolated place for the working out of further experiments was going to forget the business in hand for a pretty philanderer?

"I recognize the wonderful utility of the aeroplane," Martin agreed cordially with his guest, "and I concede the fascination of flying, but I do maintain that until it is safer than it is now, flying should be business for men, not sport for women."

"There, he's been reading about that San Diego accident. Oh, Martin, I was afraid you'd see that, and forbid Mr. Colfax taking me up again!"

"*Forbid?* If you make up your mind to fly, you'll be a Ruth Law unto yourself, and fly. But I wish you wouldn't. I've never liked it for you, and now—well, I'll admit that that San Diego affair has shaken my nerve."

"But that was the result of pure recklessness, Craig; aerobatics, stunt flying!" John Colfax protested. "Surely you don't think I'd be guilty of that, with a passenger? But poor MacKenzie was a dare-devil, and his wife as foolhardy as he."

"A dreadful way to die," Miss Merwin shuddered. "The horrible suddenness of that drop into the bay, the struggle in the water, all tangled among those straps and wires!"

"*Dreadful?* Margaret dear, no. It was a beautiful way to die! They were together, doing the thing they both loved best, until the very last. If I could choose, I'd love to go just that way. Think of it, climbing up and up those slopes of the sun until the earth dissolved into nothingness. And then, the wonderful swoop down through the glittery air into the softness of that iridescent, blue-green water. It would be like smothering to death in a bed of peacock plumes."

There was a wistful sweetness on the gay little face that took Martin back to those first nights, a year and a half ago. Once more his wife was the girl in misty white, honeysuckle bloom between her fingers, and visions in her eyes.

"We'll think about the climax when we near the end of the story," he promised, a hand on hers. "But we have a lot of good chapters coming to us, and I can't have you close our book in the middle, Nancy. I'll make a bargain with you. I'm afraid of those devilish machines, begging your pardon, Colfax. If you'll agree to give our friend here the go-by and stick to solid earth for six months,—say, I'll promise to bring you the very nicest present I can't possibly

afford when I come back from Los Angeles on Friday."

"Oh, Martin, this is so sudden!" dimpled his wife. "But what *could* you bring me, I wonder, that would take the place of canoeing among the clouds?"

"How about your war baby? Surely you haven't changed your mind since this afternoon about wanting to mother a few shares of rising stock?"

"Oh, but you hate war stocks so, Martin; you'd never——"

"I might, if the market and I can agree. And, just in case we can, suppose you make that promise right now, and then you might give Colfax some music to make up to him for having lost his job."

The household was astir early the next morning, preparatory to Martin's trip to Los Angeles. The swarthy Manuela lumbered about her kitchen, busy with relays of hot waffles, and Margaret Merwin, sitting across the breakfast table from her friends, blessed them with her eyes.

It was like honeymoon days come again, thought Martin thankfully. His wife's lips had answered almost shyly, but with what sweetness, his ardent farewell kisses! As he rode down the trail to Azusa, where he would leave his horse and take the Los Angeles stage, he made his better self many promises. Margaret had accused him of not being just. Well, now he would be generous, and surely the reward awaiting him would be sweet.

Nancy slept little that night. For hours she lay, wakeful, staring at the wavering tree shadows and weaving happy plans. Early the next morning she took the high trail for a pocket in the mountains where she knew she would find yucca in bloom. Martin loved it; hence her quest.

When she returned, carrying over her shoulder the long stalks hung with bell-like blossoms, Margaret met her with a message.

"Martin just phoned from Los Angeles to say that he will take the four o'clock stage, and he says," she spoke, with a puzzled frown, "that Manuela is to saddle Pajaro and ride down to Azusa to meet him, because he needs help to carry home your present."

Dusk was stroking the mountain with cool gray fingers and the first stars opening mild eyes when the watchers upon the veranda sighted two riders climbing the steep trail, Martin's buckskin pony in the lead and Manuela, an indistinct mass among the shadows, following on old Pajaro.

"But what on earth is she carrying? It looks exactly like—but of course it *can't* be—— Come on, Margaret, I'll race you down the trail to meet them."

Miss Merwin followed leisurely, and when she reached the little group it was to find herself in the midst of a gathering storm. Manuela, surrounded by a miscellany of bags and bundles, was seated upon a boulder, in her arms a baby of perhaps two years. Nancy was confronting her husband with eyes like blue lightning while Martin, dazed consternation in his face, stared back.

"Margaret, for Heaven's sake, make her listen to reason! I never dreamed she'd take it like this!"

"Congratulate me, Margaret, upon the arrival of a ready-made son! Martin has brought me my 'war baby!'" Nancy's voice blazed across her husband's protests, withering his attempted explanations.

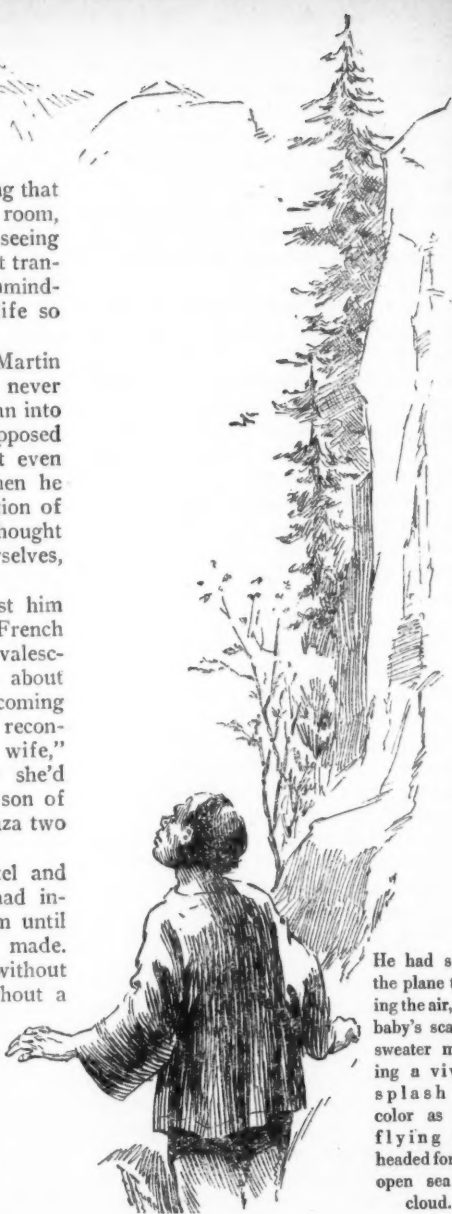
"A clever trick, wasn't it? And I thought things—were coming *right!*" Her voice broke. "Well, listen to me, Martin Craig. I'll accept your 'present,' and I'll stick to my bargain. And when I've served my term, I'll be free to go, but for six months I'll stay right here, with my feet on solid ground, as I promised you. *I'm* not a welsher!" And with no further look at the stricken group, Nancy turned and marched ahead up the trail.

Martin and Margaret talked long that night, while Nancy, in her own room, lay staring at the ceiling with unseeing eyes, and little Jules Dufroux slept tranquilly in his improvised bed, unmindful of this latest change in a life so fraught with changes.

"She won't believe me," said Martin wretchedly, "but God knows I never dreamed of such a thing until I ran into Darrow, there in the bank. I supposed he was still in France; I didn't even know of his wife's death. When he told me about the particular section of hell he's been going through, I thought I saw a way to help him and ourselves, too.

"You see, after that shell cost him his arm, he adopted the little French chap in there, while he was convalescing. He didn't have to worry about money, at least, and he was coming home to help raise funds for reconstruction work. *He knew his wife,*" Craig reflected bitterly, "*knew she'd open her heart to the homeless son of a hero.* But—she died of influenza two days before his boat docked.

"I went with him to his hotel and saw the little chap. Darrow had installed a nurse to look after him until other arrangements could be made. Margaret, there was a baby without a home; here was a home without a baby, and small hopes of one. I pictured Nancy's profitless days turned into busy, happy ones. I believed her innate womanliness would respond to a child's need. Well—I was all wrong, but the thing's done now, and I'm going to stay with it."



He had seen the plane taking the air, the baby's scarlet sweater making a vivid splash of color as the flying fish headed for the open sea of cloud.

"You were mistaken, perhaps, but one can't do wrong if one means right, and if you can be patient enough, things will work out yet. Martin, when you two elected to travel together you didn't expect such rough roads, and now—you must have endurance for both. Don't lose courage, and don't fail her. Make your love a staff for her to lean on, not a goad to urge her beyond her strength, and you'll yet reach the heights, hand in hand!"

When Nancy and her guest appeared at breakfast next morning they found Martin already seated. Ensnared upon his knee was the tiny Jules, suspiciously twisted and bunched-looking as to garments, intent upon his bowl of oatmeal.

Martin greeted them with forced cheerfulness.

"Just look at the little beggar eat! I knew he was hungry, so we decided not to wait, didn't we, old-timer? Manuela bathed him, and I," proudly, "got him into his clothes."

"I should judge so," said Nancy in a voice of iced honey. "But hereafter we'll consider that my—privilege. And you'd better send down to the valley and order a high chair. I shall teach him to sit at table and feed himself properly. By the way," with angelic malice, "my domestic duties will keep me at home, hereafter, but we can still entertain. Suppose you stop, on your way to the mine, and ask Mr. Colfax to ride over this evening. I'll arrange a tableau for him: Nancy the Roaming Matron, clasping her son and exclaiming: 'This are my Jules!'"

Within the week, Miss Merwin departed for the round of California visits which was to precede her return to the East. As summer melted into autumn an unmistakable atmosphere of hominess settled upon the mountain cabin, despite the fact that the estrangement of husband and wife persisted. In the making of animal cookies and minute rompers Nancy found new worlds to

conquer, and she was vastly proud of her prowess with needle and mixing spoon. As for Martin, when he smoked in the lilac-hued dusk, the murmured lullabies that floated out to him put an ecstatic ache in his throat and he dreamed ahead, far down a vista of years.

The tiny Jules was an ever-increasing joy. Nancy could not resist his sunny gravity, his nestling movements so dearly babyish, but to Martin she was unrelenting. The baby served as an excuse for her unvarying refusal of Martin's wistful pleas that she ride with him in the freshness of the mountain mornings or read aloud under the evening lamp. "I haven't time to play now," she would answer airily. "I have to take my French lesson!"

True, there were rare occasions when, taken unaware, Nancy softened, whereupon Martin took heart of grace. There was the day when he brought home a warm, blundering bundle of puppyhood, and Nancy, all rosy and disheveled, admitted him to temporary partnership as she frolicked with dog and baby.

"We'll feed him raw meat every day," she announced, "and then take him to Europe and sick him on the kaiser!"

There was the night when a sudden mountain storm had shaken the cabin, and little Jules had wakened, sobbing affrightedly at the thunder's booming and the sheeted flames of lightning, reminiscent of who knows what terrors. Kneeling on either side of the baby's bed, husband and wife had soothed him until he slept again. When they rose, Martin, emboldened by the consciousness of a gentler Nancy, stooped and left a kiss upon her unbound hair, and Nancy, the dreams scarcely banished from her eyes, did not rebuff him.

But these moods were fleeting, and Martin bore with the less happy ones with steadfast forbearance. He had definitely chosen the path of patience

and no provocation could lure him therefrom. Even John Colfax's visits provoked no remonstrance, though more than once Martin had winced and paled at some unmistakable evidence that he had interrupted a conversation not meant for his sharing.

The period for which Nancy was bound by her promise lacked but a few days of completion when Martin returned early from the mine one afternoon, suffering with a severe headache induced by the sun. Quiet lay upon the cabin; a spicy fragrance was wafted from the little kitchen where Manuela was at work. In the living room the tiny Jules lay in the beautiful abandonment of babyhood, taking his accustomed nap, but Nancy was nowhere about.

With a queer ache gnawing at his heart, Martin lay down upon the broad couch and drew the sleeping child into his lonely arms. An hour or so later he was awakened from a troubled sleep by voices outside the open window.

"I bless you," John Colfax was saying, "for telling me that I may hope. But—are you *sure*? If you knew how unworthy I feel——"

"I have no right to tell you so," Nancy's voice was vibrantly sweet, "but I am *sure*. As for unworthiness, a love as fine and big as yours makes a man worthy of *any* woman;" and they passed down the trail out of hearing.

Sick in mind and body, Martin could not bring himself to tell his wife, that night, what he had overheard. When she returned and joined him at the evening meal there was in her manner toward him an unwonted wistfulness, almost a tenderness, that made him ache with pity for himself and her.

"She doesn't *want* to stab me," he told himself, "my poor little, little girl!"

For two days Martin wrestled with his bitter problem. Should he fight to the last ditch; hold her at any cost? Or should he abandon a cause already

lost, and since her heart had gone, set her free to follow? It was the last day of the six months when he rode up the home trail at sunset, his decision made.

"The señora, she go down the trail," Manuela told him in answer to his questioning, "oh, long time ago. Si, to the flying man, she tell me, and the niño, she take him, too."

Martin did not hesitate. Instantly he was upon his horse and away. Arrived at the landing place, he found the plane gone and no trace of master or guest. Sick with apprehension, he sought out the Chinaman who served Colfax and learned that Nancy had arrived early in the afternoon. She and Colfax had been sitting in the shade of a tree, talking, while little Jules played near by, when Kong went down the trail to the spring. Returning, he had seen from a distance the plane taking the air, the baby's scarlet sweater making a vivid splash of color as the flying fish headed for the open sea of cloud.

His horse's bridle over his arm, Martin stumbled back up the mountain to his cabin. In the living room, dark now, he dropped down beside the table, his head upon his arms. So it had come, this blight that struck at the very root of his being. He wondered dully why they had hampered their flight by a child's presence. Strangely enough he felt no added pain over the loss of the little lad whom he so loved. It was Nancy he wanted! Nancy!

Almost benumbed at first, Martin's suffering became more poignant as realization grew upon him, and presently, from the darkness, came the sounds of a man's grief which it breaks one's heart to hear. It was some time later that Manuela entered, bearing a light. Behind her walked Nancy, wind-blown and haggard but infinitely lovely, and John Colfax with Jules' little figure in his arms.

As Martin raised a ravaged face to confront them, Nancy ran to him with a little woeful cry.

"Oh, my Martin dear, my Martin dear! I see what you thought. It was cruel to hurt you so, but I couldn't help it. It was Jules, dear; he found some nightshade berries where he was playing, and ate them. Oh," with a shudder, "we were afraid we couldn't save him! If it hadn't been for John, blessed John and his machine, our baby would have died before we could have gotten help!"

Martin stared at them, not quite comprehending, in the revulsion of feeling, what it was all about.

"There is no doctor here, you know," Colfax took up the explanation, "and we had to act, not think. We headed for the Arcadia aviation field, and found the army doctor in, thank God! After that," he smiled, "there was nothing to it, and by morning the youngster will be as good as new."

Nancy was holding her husband's face against her breast as though he were a tired child, and his arms clasped her close.

"Forgive me, dear; forgive me for everything! I've been so stubborn, so stiff-necked and proud, but there never was a minute when I didn't love you. Only—for a while I couldn't make you believe it, and then I tried to keep you from finding it out! And when you brought the baby—I'm ashamed, now, but then I thought it was a trick."

Martin held her closer as she went on.

"And when I saw how John loved

Margaret, it made me envious of a happiness I couldn't have."

"How John—loved Margaret!" Martin's voice was blank amaze.

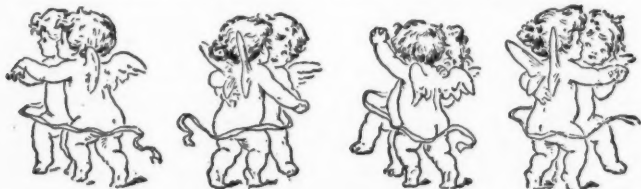
"Oh, come now, Craig! Don't pretend you haven't seen how I was always hanging around your place, hoping, with your wife's guidance, to find my way into Margaret's heart."

"He thought it was I whom you wanted," Nancy confessed shamefacedly, "and I let him, just to be hateful. Oh, Martin, don't you know that nobody but you would give me a second thought, once he knew Margaret? Only John so revered her saintship that he was afraid to hint at his feelings, and he only confessed them to me after she went away. I encouraged him all I could without betraying her confidence, and then, the other day, I broke my word to her and told him what she felt. She gave herself away, once, when she was pleading with me not to hurt him, and then I made her confess. And that's why John is leaving for Santa Barbara to-morrow!"

There was a brotherly warmth in the handclasp with which the two men parted, and in a moment husband and wife were alone with the sleeping child.

"Martin, I'm never going to hurt you again," Nancy told him. "You've shown me what it means to go forward, with a smile, and all the rest of my life I shall keep step with you. Trust me, dear!"

"I know, my wife. It is going to be as Saint Margaret promised; we'll climb together until we rest in the sunshine at the top of Love Hill."



Lost and Found

By Helen Drew

A despondent girl, at the end of her resources, tests a brilliant idea.



JANE EATON awoke that morning with a heavy heart. Money—or rather the lack of it—was the cause of her depression, and she saw as she looked out that the weather was in keeping with her spirits.

She partially dressed, then, striking a match, she lighted the little gas stove and started her breakfast of coffee and toast. The gas stove stood on an old wooden table behind the screen. The screen served to separate the kitchenette from the rest of the apartment; and the rest of the apartment was a solitary room that played many parts. In the early morning it was an excellent breakfast room, and later, when the bed was made over into a sofa and the screen placed at a certain angle, it made a good living room. Sometimes it was a studio. Then it was rakish indeed and seemed the soul of disorder; and sometimes it was a laundry, for Jane washed everything at the basin in the corner save the sheets, pillowcases, and towels, which were supplied by the landlady. But at night it was always a bedroom; and so well did it "look" each part that it was hard to believe that it was just a rôle and not a reality.

Jane opened the window and looked out while she waited for the toast to

brown. It was too early for any but the first commuters to be astir, and as she looked toward Main Street she could see a stream of them going to the station.

"It must be the seven-forty-five," she said to herself as she saw Captain Barrie cross the street—more than one person depended upon the punctual captain for the time. And as she looked at the irregular line of commuters she didn't know whether to pity them or envy them. She didn't, in her heart, envy any one in the business world. "But still," she thought, "they have one compensation at least; they have wages or a salary they can depend upon every week, and it's better to have it than to be looking for it!" She sighed and went back to the toast and coffee.

When her breakfast was over she seated herself in the rocker by the window and, opening her purse, she dumped the contents in her lap. She counted the coins and bills. "Three dollars and seventy-four cents," she said to herself. That was all the money she possessed, and her heart, that was already heavy, gained in weight and sank lower.

Jane was an artist, both by profession and by right of temperament, which meant, in other words, that she was not



always to be relied upon; but she had one trait that was unlooked for—she had inherited Yankee blood and consequently she was resourceful. It had stood her in good stead, that trait, and had prevented her from ever sinking so low before, financially speaking.

Besides doing some illustrative and decorative work for some of the book publishers, she taught drawing to the younger members of Millbrook society. Not that they really needed "art," as their mothers thought they did, but it gave her an opportunity to add to her small income. It would have been an excellent arrangement had they paid her as promptly as they paid the grocer, the butcher, or the plumber. But they never did, and she sometimes wished that artists had no social standing, or rather, that they might exchange it for the financial standing of the butcher, for, after all, there was small comfort to be had in patronage.

The three dollars and seventy-four cents seemed to shrink even while she looked at it, for she realized suddenly that it was the twenty-eighth of the month; that the rent was due on the first; that the landlady was relentless, and that money must be had. She knew, too, that the money coming to her from the publishers she would not receive before the tenth. Clearly, there was only one thing to be done. She must ask some of the mothers of her pupils to pay up their long-standing bills; there was no other alternative, for she had nothing of any value that she could pawn or sell.

She took her memorandum book from her purse.

"There's Mrs. Thompson—she owes me ten dollars; and Mrs. Perry owes me fourteen dollars; and Mrs. Hamilton—she owes me seven dollars; and Mrs. Goodwin eighteen dollars. Four and seven are eleven and eight is nineteen; three and one are four—forty-nine dollars; quite a decent sum if I collect it

all. That would pay the rent and carry me over until I could get the money from Hamptons. Oh, and there's that thirty dollars that the McClane's owe me, but I never do expect to see that! Well, there's one thing I can say seriously, and that's if all the money that is owing to me were paid, I'm afraid, I'm seriously afraid, that I'd have to be taken to the hospital. The shock would be too great."

She put away the book with a smile, for hard as the struggle had been for her to maintain a livelihood, it had been softened by the fact that she had a sense of humor and could get a little fun out of the game of poverty. She rose and straightened up the apartment, and in a few minutes it took on again the rôle of living room that it played daily for its manager and an audience that was made up of occasional girl friends who strayed in from time to time. Then she dressed and tried to gather courage for the work in hand—the work of collecting the money she had earned.

Jane Eaton was almost pretty; that is, she would have been pretty had her income been larger and steady. It makes a difference, for there was a suggestion of anxiety and pleasure hunger in her face that financial independence would have erased.

Once out in the street, she tried again to fortify her courage by reassurance. She tried to believe that she would get the money. She had heard a great deal of talk among some of her friends about the great value of the correct mental attitude—that if you constantly believe and hold the thought of success in your mind you will be successful—and it took as great an amount of courage to get her mind in that frame as it did to go after the money.

She came first to Mrs. Hamilton's, but now that she was at the door the ringing of the bell was like diving. Finally, however, she accomplished it. A maid opened the door, and when Jane

had asked for Mrs. Hamilton she said: "Sit down in—in there." And Jane seated herself near the window and looked around at the sumptuously furnished living room. The lamp that stood on the table near by cost more than her living expenses for a month, Jane thought as she sat waiting.

"Oh, my dear, it is so pleasant to see you!" gushed Mrs. Hamilton as she came into the room.

"I don't know that you'll think so when I tell you what I came for," Jane said, as Mrs. Hamilton held her hand for a brief moment.

"Why, it can't be anything so dreadful. Sit down and tell me all about it," Mrs. Hamilton urged.

"It's just the money for the lessons. If you could let me have it, it would help me so much!" Jane began.

"Oh, my dear, you're not worrying about that, I hope! Why, Henry will send you the check when he comes home. He's away now and I never pay the bills myself. Henry always tends to them. I'm really terribly sorry!" Mrs. Hamilton did not say this maliciously, but Jane wished herself a hundred miles away from there before she had finished speaking. Some irresponsible people have a way of talking that gives rise to that feeling as nothing else will, and women who have never earned their own living are sometimes indifferent to their sisters who do.

Jane made her way out, trying to hide her confusion and defeat under a cover of gayety and convention. She walked along the street trying to imagine that in the next house success awaited her. But the feeling of success on an empty purse is like a feeling of fullness on an empty stomach—hard to imagine and still harder to feel.

Jane turned into the next avenue, which was broad and fashionable, and when she reached the third house from the corner she turned her steps toward the door, and rang the bell.

"Is Mrs. Goodwin in?" Jane asked.

"Yes, come in, Miss Eaton," the maid replied, and Jane seated herself again to wait. A smart little motor drove up to the door and Jane could see from her place by the window the woman who climbed down from the driver's seat. She came toward the house and, once admitted by the maid, she ran upstairs. She was a chum of Mrs. Goodwin's and Jane had to wait and listen to the laughing and talking that went on overhead, and somehow it jarred on her. Perhaps she felt her neglect more keenly because of her errand.

Presently she heard Mrs. Goodwin and her friend coming downstairs.

"What is it? What can I do for you?" Mrs. Goodwin asked from the doorway, while her friend stood by her waiting. Both women had their wraps on.

"Why—why——" Poor Jane! She hardly knew what to say. The sentence that she had so carefully rehearsed seemed to have taken wings and she stood speechless. It would have been so much easier to speak to Mrs. Goodwin alone, but this third woman complicated matters. She was perfectly groomed and dressed, a thing that seemed to enhance her naturally overbearing manner and contradict its true purpose, making her repellent and not appealing. Mrs. Goodwin, too, seemed touched by it.

"What is it?" she asked again. "Can't you tell me? I'm in a great hurry!"

And the other woman, seeming to define Jane's embarrassment, was plainly amused.

"I need—I would like to have, if you could let me, the money that's coming to me," Jane said, seeming to shrink even in her own estimation, as she spoke, for her tones were empty of conviction.

"Oh, is that all? Why, certainly you'll get it! But I don't think I'd get in such a fret about it if I were you!

Mr. Goodwin has had a great many obligations to meet, otherwise you would have had it before now and I should have been spared this," she said with a meaning glance at her friend, which hurt Jane fully as much as her words and manner.

They turned then and went out, leaving Jane to slink along in back, sicker at heart than she had ever been before. She hadn't the courage to go on to another place—there were yet two more people who owed her money—but she went, nevertheless, for although she had lost courage, she still retained hope.

The Perrys lived in a small house on one of the side streets, but they were known as one of the oldest families and looked up to because their finances were in better condition than their appearances would seem to indicate.

But Mrs. Perry, standing near an upper window, saw Jane as she turned in at the walk.

"Tell Miss Eaton that I have gone out for the day," she said, turning to the "hired girl," who had started to answer the bell. Mrs. Perry imagined that Jane had come for money, and she was in no mood to pay her bills that morning. Having plenty of money, she always had to wait for moods before she could bring herself to open her purse.

And as Jane heard the "hired girl" say that Mrs. Perry was out, it seemed more of a relief than a disappointment.

She turned away heartsick and weary. It had all seemed so easy there in her little room as she had looked in her book at the names of the people who owed her money. It seemed as if she had but to ask and she would receive! This, then, was such a different thing than she had imagined it would be. And she contrasted her position with that of the various women whose homes she was passing. They were sheltered and protected from any such humiliations as she was at this moment enduring. Naturally she envied them—the women

who lived in those lovely houses whose very appearance suggested comfort, to say nothing of luxury. Here and there she caught a glimpse of a room beautifully furnished, or a limousine through the open door of a garage, and she suffered, not to see others have the beauties of life, but to feel the utter deprivation of even the little that was hers by right of labor.

The last place left to go was to see Mrs. Thompson. Mrs. Thompson had married one of the leading citizens but, for all of that, she had no social standing among the best families, for the simple reason that she had been—nobody knew what, but they imagined an actress—and while the women of the town were intensely curious about her, they never admitted her. And in that, she was sensible enough to appreciate her good fortune.

When Jane rang the bell the door was opened promptly by Mrs. Thompson herself. She knew at the first glance that there was something wrong with the girl and her sympathy was aroused.

"Why, Jane, I was just thinking about you! Come in," she said, a kindly welcome showing in the tones of her voice. She didn't know what the matter was, and with great delicacy she seemed not to notice Jane's dejection. "You know, I have a terrible conscience! It gives me more trouble than a relative, and it was a great relief to me to see you come up the walk, for I thought: 'Now I'll give her that ten dollars and that'll be off my mind.' Take off your coat and have a cup of coffee with me. I'm just having my second cup and it's ever so much nicer to have somebody to enjoy it with." And Jane inwardly blessed her and thanked God that an occasional human being inhabited the earth that was filled with so many people.

When she left with the ten dollars she felt better, somehow stimulated; but

still she realized that thirteen dollars and seventy-four cents would never pay her rent, to say nothing of buying food enough to carry her over to the middle of the month when she would receive her check. It was a miserable situation, and once back in her little room she dropped into the rocker to think out, if possible, an answer to the riddle that seemed to have no solution. But her mind traveled around in a circle.

She picked up the *Millbrook Evening Journal* partly because it was lying near and partly because she thought it would give her mind a rest from her troubles. She idly turned over its few sheets until she came to the last page, which contained a column of personals, some obituaries and weddings, the lost-and-found column, and the movie-theater ads. She glanced through the personals and then to the lost-and-found column.

LOST: A purse with five dollars and keys. Finder will please return to A. Stetson, 36 Cypress Street.

"I wish I'd ever find anything! But then, I couldn't keep it if I did. I'd have to give it back. Now everybody in town will see that ad and she'll get her money back before night. It's a good way to get money!" And as the thought went through her mind, she dropped the paper and sat for a few minutes as if entranced.

"I'll try it!" she suddenly decided. "It will only cost a quarter and really, it's my only chance. People always pay more attention to your accidents than they do to your needs."

And so, at four o'clock, when the *Millbrook Evening Journal* came off the press, there, tucked away in the lost-and-found column, was this innocent little item:

Lost: A purse with seventy dollars in bills. Finder will please return to Jane Eaton and receive a reward. 10 Elm Street.

The *Millbrook Evening Journal* could boast of a greater percentage of thorough readers than many a metropolitan

daily, for the women scanned its pages from cover to cover.

Soon the party wires were humming with discussions of Jane's loss. She had a large acquaintance in town and her loss was being talked over by the mothers of her pupils as well as by other mothers.

"Oh, that's why she was here to-day for her money!" exclaimed Mrs. Goodwin when her glance fell on the ad. "I wondered why she was so upset. I wish she had told me then about it, for I could have given her the money just as well as not." Then, reaching for her purse, she counted out eighteen dollars. "Julian," she called to her son, "I want you to take this over to Miss Eaton."

She slipped the money into an envelope with this note:

DEAR MISS EATON: Why didn't you tell me about your dreadful misfortune this morning? It puts the matter in such a different light. I can quite comprehend your feelings, and next time, my dear, do be explicit. I am sending you this money, for if you don't recover your loss promptly, it may help some, anyway. Most sincerely,

GRACE GOODWIN.

And promptly on the heels of Julian came Addie Tyler.

"Oh, Jane!" she exclaimed, "isn't it terrible to think of you losing all that money! You know, I've owed you seventy-five cents for the longest time, and when I saw your ad I hurried right over. Here, take it!"

Another knock on her door and the maid from Mrs. McClane's brought the thirty dollars that she had long since given up, that she had not even called for. And Mrs. Perry came herself with her fourteen dollars, a glass of black currant jelly, and her sympathy. And lastly, Mrs. Hamilton sent her chauffeur down with her seven dollars.

Altogether it was a very fruitful evening and Jane, as she lay a long time before going to sleep, giggled to herself as she thought of how she had gathered her harvest.

A Word to the Habitually Thin

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

BETWEEN emaciation and underweight there is a wide gulf.

The weight is often insufficient because the proper foods are not selected or, being selected, are not assimilated. Malnutrition is not always the result of diseased states. It may arise from feebleness of the digestive forces, superinduced by lack of exercise and fresh air, to depressing influences, insufficient or profitless sleep, and so on. Nervousness frequently induces loss of weight or acts as a deterrent to the gain of flesh. Given a good digestive tract, comparatively little food of high caloric value will sustain and thoroughly nourish a normal system, so maintaining an equable body weight.

The condition of the teeth must be looked into in all constitutional failures to assimilate food. Every one is now acquainted with the fact that the digestion of carbohydrates—fat-making foods—begins in the mouth, and that complete mastication with *insalivation* is the first demand with regard to digestion and assimilation of this food group. Therefore every one who is underweight should look to his teeth first. The teeth must be sound and healthy to permit thorough grinding. For the same reason, and to keep the food comparatively free from bacteria, artificial dentures must fit perfectly. This precaution is necessary also to

prevent the gums from becoming sore and diseased. Diseased gums is a condition fraught with terror for the digestive tract and system in general. Teeth, whether real or artificial, must be sound and firmly embedded in hard, healthy gums. By "insalivation" is meant the mixing of food in the mouth with so much saliva that it becomes liquified. A sip of water to moisten a mouthful of food does not aid the digestion of carbohydrates, the mere liquid element being not sufficient. The properties of saliva have an immeasurably more important effect than just moistening the food bolus. The parotid glands—salivary glands—situated just in front of the ears, are stimulated only by dry food. This fact should be of interest to those desirous of acquiring weight, as well as of correcting digestive disorders.

All this does not mean that liquids should not be taken. On the contrary, thin persons require a great deal more fluid than they are in the habit of consuming. Milk is an ideal food for them. Two quarts daily in doses of one pint every four hours is none too much along with regular meals. Eggs are usually fattening. Two or three eggs of first quality, thoroughly beaten and then whipped into the milk with a suitable amount of sugar, make the dose far more acceptable to the palate. So

many say: "I cannot take milk," meaning: "I do not like milk." The distaste for milk is a perverted one. Every one should enjoy milk because it is nature's food. Lime water may be added to the milk, and Vichy or some other alkaline water aids materially in its digestion as well as giving the system the necessary amount of liquid.

Water is a great solvent. Not only does it hasten the process of digestion, the absorption of chyle—digested food—but it permeates all the tissues and fills these out, which is preëminently what thin people require—*moisture to fill out their drained tissues*. For this purpose six to eight glassfuls of clear, sparkling water every day are of great benefit. While water should not be used for the purpose of "washing down" food, it should be taken generously between mouthfuls of food, as this tends to increase the weight. One thing for thin people to remember is this: What is usually condemned for obesity cases can be used to advantage in cases of underweight. For instance, all foods that the stout must eliminate from their dietaries, can be included in the fattening process. Among these are pure rich butter, olive oil, and all cereals, especially corn meal. There are many ways in which corn meal can be prepared. As mush, with sugar and cream, it makes a delicious breakfast dish; fried mush with molasses is highly palatable as well as fattening; corn-meal muffins with butter are equally so. While such dishes make a greater appeal in winter because they are "heating" foods, they also have their place on a summer menu for thin people, because the blood of thin people is usually thin. That is to say, they are not "full-blooded," so that "heating" foods are good for them, even in warm weather. Corn-meal mush, by the way, is equally delicious when eaten cold with cold milk.

Other foods relatively high as fat

producers are cream, all kinds of cheese, pork, ham, bacon, lard, sugars, chocolate, cocoa, macaroni, spaghetti, potatoes, peas, beans, lentils, rich, concentrated soups, white bread, plain puddings, custards—not fancy cakes and pastries—figs, bananas, grapes, dates, peaches, melons, in fact, all sweet fruits.

This does not mean that thin persons should make up their diet largely of these foods. It means that these should be included in a well-regulated, well-balanced dietary. An inordinate appetite may be displayed by one markedly underweight, and continual astonishment expressed that the food does no good. In such cases, the fact is that food is usually swallowed or "bolted" without the slightest regard for the laws of hygiene and dietetics.

To do good, food must be partially digested in the mouth before it reaches the stomach. Otherwise the digestive juices are unable to penetrate the mass and convert it into the milky stream called "chyle," and fermentative indigestion and other ills, so common in thin people, result. It is not at all necessary that large quantities of food be consumed, in order to make flesh. On the contrary, meals of suitable quality, slowly and carefully eaten, with a cheerful mind, will be sure to yield their full measure of nourishment to the tissues.

If, as is the case, a fatal attack of acute indigestion can be brought on by anger while at table, one can readily see how necessary to normal digestion the development of a cheerful, optimistic spirit becomes, especially at meal times.

To increase weight it is not merely necessary to consume a given amount of nourishing food, well masticated. Weight resides in the muscular system, and in the majority of thin persons, this system is decidedly underdeveloped. If not so at birth, it often degenerates through lack of exercise; or, as the result of severe illness, typhoid fever for

instance, the muscles of the body become greatly attenuated, remaining so, if persistent hygienic measures are not resorted to over a long period of time.

If the average person appreciated the power which lies in the muscular system, mothers would see to it that their children were given every opportunity for developing it. It is a notable fact that the most eminent men of modern and ancient times possessed finely developed muscular systems. In ancient Greece even the women and children had their own gymnasias, with baths, and at no time in the world's history has the human figure, *especially the female figure*, attained such perfection. It is safe to say that if all children were given the means—joyful, systematic daily exercise, with aquarian sports—we would see fewer frail bodies.

Summer is an ideal period in which to begin a new schedule of exercise. Systematic out-of-door exercise, if only rhythmic walking, will prove highly beneficial. Water sports cannot be too highly recommended.

While the present era is emphatically the day of the thin woman, very few who are underweight are well rounded in those regions which contribute to a woman's charm of appearance. For many women evening dress is impossible for this reason. Prominent collar bones and shoulder blades, and bony arms are glaringly brought to the fore with the present mode of dress. Scrawny throats in even quite young women, besides utterly destroying a youthful appearance, give evidence of an underlying lack of fat distribution or muscular development.

Treatment must combine massage with a fattening cream, and breathing exercises. The following is an excellent preparation for use in massaging:

Cocoa butter, 2 ounces; lanolin, 2 ounces; olive oil or almond oil, 1 ounce; oil of geranium, 10 drops or more.

Place all the fats in a porcelain kettle over a steamer of hot water. Remove as soon as melted and stir with a porcelain spoon until the ingredients are completely mixed. Standing the kettle in cold water while beating the fats will facilitate the cooling process. Unless continually stirred, the fats will again separate into their component parts. The perfume is added just before the cream is put into a wide-mouthed jar and set away for future use.

In applying it, the tissue must first be cleansed either with cleansing cream, cleansing meals, or a bland soap, and sufficient hot water to redden the parts. Then rub in the fattening cream with proper massage movements, using ten or fifteen minutes for the process. Wipe off all the excess fat and cover the tissues snugly with cold cloths. To be effective, the treatment should be pursued twice a day.

With men a painful spareness does not present itself in the light of a frightful bugaboo when the subject of clothes occupies their attention. Take shoes, for instance. Men with ankles like a child's are content to wear shoes that fit the feet, giving no heed to a well-fitting upper. Far from filling out this part of the shoe, a space of half an inch exists between ankle and shoe, which is offensive to a fastidious eye, and which will not be tolerated in the case of women, no matter how indifferent they may otherwise be in dress. The same holds true with collars! Do extremely thin men hesitate to ask for a small-sized collar, preferring to look grotesque and to accentuate the smallness of the neck by wearing collars an inch too large? No woman can afford such seeming indifference. She must consult her physique first, before deciding upon any article of wearing apparel.

The present modes, while favoring the slender woman, make the thin

woman appear ridiculous. Some manikins on display in the shops are a travesty upon the "female form divine." The petite creature is in her element to-day, for by nature she is endowed with what her frankly plump sisters would give their eyeteeth to achieve. Said one woman to another in a fashionable Fifth Avenue atelier the other day: "My dear, I would give anything for your slender neck and narrow chest." "Well," replied the other, "I have been working five years to put a few ounces of flesh on it." There was a time when no woman who did not possess a plump throat would venture into the open in a collarless waist. But what would you? Fashions *must* be obeyed, and it *does* make for greater health and more rapid development to expose the neck whether it is pretty or not. A scrawny neck is, however, not pretty to look at, even if the face be very attractive.

Almost every thin woman has a long neck and, if need be, a standing collar, flaring back from the ears, should be attached to a high neckband, the throat in front being free. If the collars are made of exquisite lace, the neck is beautifully and becomingly dressed. Younger women may wear the hair very low at the nape of the neck, so shortening this feature decidedly. The fashion of draping the throat loosely with tulle, is a kind one. A thin face and pointed chin are vastly improved by a thick *ruche* or by tiny frills of lace bordering separate neckbands.

One of the first steps in presenting an attractive appearance is to *hide* one's defects. When the ankle is painfully thin, for instance, a broad buckle worn high on the instep looks well. Stockings of gray or white, with figures, "dress" a thin ankle better than plain black. Care must be taken that low shoes fit snugly.

Large, thin hands require special dressings. Sleeves must never be tight

unless very long, with a lacy cuff flaring over the hands. Loose frills falling to the knuckles are very feminine and attractive, especially with exquisitely kept finger tips. The short-sleeved or sleeveless mode is not for the woman with scrawny arms and elbows.

ROUNDING OUT EXERCISES.

While primarily designed to improve the neck and bust, the following exercises will develop the chest by cultivating habits of healthy breathing; thus the blood is purified and the circulation stimulated, and so the entire body is benefited.

Practice only in a room flooded with fresh air, or in the open air. Practice whenever convenient. Train the lungs to exercise, to expand, and to demand fresh air. The entire body is thus invigorated, and the blood vastly improved.

EXERCISE NO. 1.

Stand erect with both feet firmly on the floor. Practice rising and lowering on the toes. Unsteadiness on one's feet interferes seriously with the necessary deep and long breathing.

Alternate this exercise with one that carries the arms outstretched horizontally.

Another exercise is to allow the arms to hang with the hands together, palms inward, thumbs interlaced in front of you. Then raise the arms directly overhead, at the same time filling the lungs to their full capacity.

EXERCISE NO. 2.

This exercise is much the same as No. 1, except that the arms are raised up at the sides until they are at right angles to the sides of the body, then gradually brought forward, taking care to bring the hands no closer together in front than the width of the shoulders. In bringing the hands closer,

the chest would be contracted. While taking these movements, breathe in. Then bring the arms back to their first position at right angles with the sides of the body, then to the sides, exhaling meanwhile. Repeat this exercise five or ten times.

Having established proper breathing, continue with these simple exercises:

I. To increase the breadth of the shoulder measurements, to strengthen the lungs, and, by the way, to *increase the bust markedly as well as to bury the collar bones*. Stand straight, with head erect, in such a way that one arm extended parallel with the floor will just touch the wall. In this position, move the feet an inch at a time away from the wall, and, while keeping the legs and lower spine erect, stretch the arm and shoulder so as to keep the tips of the fingers continually in touch with the wall. Repeat these movements with the other arm.

II. To develop the neck, to give the head a graceful poise, to exercise the great arteries and veins that pass

through the neck, and to give tone to the bronchial tubes, hold the body from the shoulders down stiff and straight, turn the head slowly from side to side, a circular or rotary movement. Repeat ten times. Then move the head forward upon the chest, backward upon the spine, and laterally upon the shoulders. Repeat in each direction ten times. Finally, lie flat on the floor with the arms extended straight on either side of the body but not touching the floor. Slowly raise the body until the sitting position is attained. Recline once more and repeat the movement. When this exercise becomes easy, place the hands on the back of the head and raise the upper part of the body as before.

Both these simple exercises have a marvelous effect upon the abdominal and hip muscles. The digestive organs will be wonderfully benefited by it and the general health astonishingly improved, to say nothing of the change which will shortly take place in the whole appearance.

WHAT READERS ASK

MINNIE D.—Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and I will furnish you with black-head and pimple treatment.

C. C. C.—Have you ever tried the bust astringent advised by the celebrated French specialist, Doctor Vaucaire? If not, I will send you formula upon request.

LOUIS H.—The condition of your complexion is not purely local. Look after your digestive tract and cure any existing constiveness. Did you see the article published in the November, 1918, number of this magazine on "Intestinal Sluggishness?" You should send for a copy and follow accurately the directions given therein.

NEARLY SIXTEEN.—You are too young to use powder, or to require massage of the face. Try carbollic zinc ointment on the scaly portion of your skin, applying it just before retiring. I judge from the condition of your teeth and eyes that you are guilty

of errors in diet. Perhaps you do not wear the correct glasses for reading and are suffering more or less from eyestrain. If you will write me for a private reply, I will gladly go into greater detail as to your needs.

T. F. D.—I think you take too much coffee. Once a day, with breakfast, is quite sufficient. Yes, swimming will reduce your girth, but not so surely as rowing, bending, and other exercises that bring the muscles and tissues of the waistline into active and vigorous play. The following exercise is perhaps best for this purpose. Loosely clad, stand erect, with the feet firmly planted on the floor; raise the arms above the head, and bend the body forward at the waist, keeping the legs perfectly rigid the while, until the finger tips touch the floor. Repeat this ten times. Twisting and bending from the waist, holding the body in the same position as just described, is a beneficial exercise. See last month's article in this magazine.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.



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31x4	8.00	2.25	36x5	12.50	3.60
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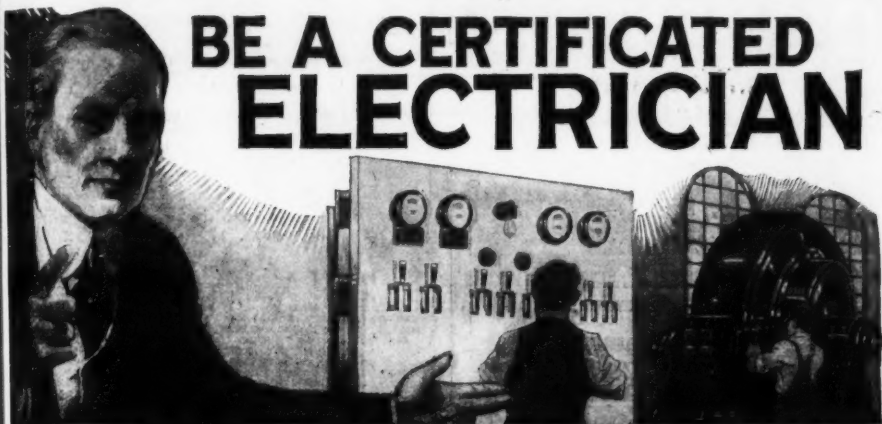
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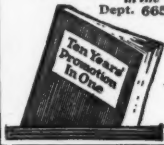
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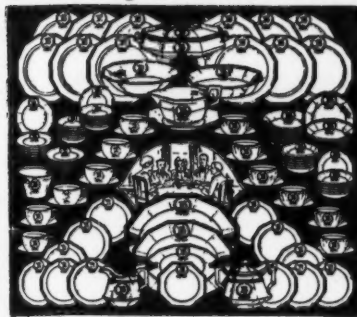
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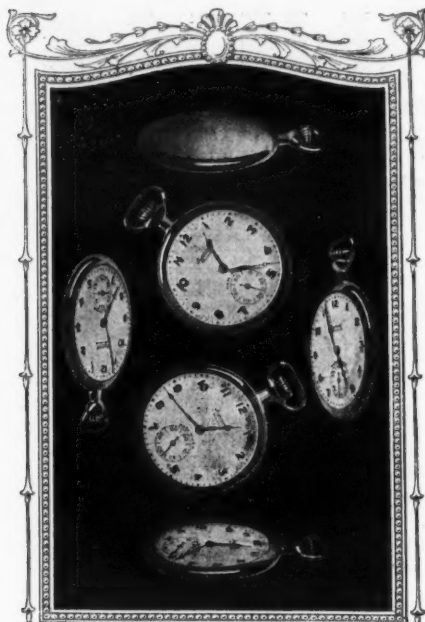
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From That Tired, Aching, Broken-Down Feeling.


Jung's Arch Brace, just out, is an elastic, light, comfortable, economical and corrective brace. Relieves tired and aching feet instantly. Corrects fallen arches and foot-strain. Strengthens and supports muscles. No unsightly humps.

No leather pads. No metal plates. Made of specially prepared "Superlast" Recommended by physicians. Guaranteed. Price \$1.00 per pair. Money back if not satisfied. Order today. Booklet free. Ask your shoe dealer or druggist.


Geo. H. Jung Co. 2470 Jung Bldg. Cincinnati, O.

DRIVER AGENTS WANTED

116-inch Wheel Base



158-inch Spring Suspension



5-Place Touring

To drive and demonstrate 1920, 4-cyl., 37 H. P. BUSH Car-Tin-Kee Bearings—Willard Batteries—2 Unit Str. & Lge.—Full Floating Axle. Write at once for the best Automobile Offer in existence—don't wait—prompt shipments. Money-back guarantee.

BUSH
MOTOR CO., Bush Temple, Chicago, Illinois

FREE Puncture Proof TUBE 6000 Mile Guarantee



UNION TIRES represent the highest standard in reconstructed tires. Their reinforcement of 4 extra layers of fabric reduces greatly blowout and puncture possibilities. Over 200,000 in use. To further increase mileage, we include with every tire ordered a **PUNCTURE PROOF TUBE FREE** that under ordinary conditions will last ten to 20,000 miles. Our 5,000-mile tire guarantee certificate with every tire.

Prices Include Tire and Tube

30x3.....	\$7.40	32x4 1/2.....	\$12.00
30x3 1/2.....	8.50	32x4 1/2.....	12.50
32x3 1/2.....	9.10	34x4 1/2.....	15.15
31x4.....	10.35	35x4 1/2.....	15.40
32x4.....	10.70	36x4 1/2.....	15.65
33x4.....	11.15	36x5.....	14.85
34x4.....	11.50	37x5.....	14.95

Retailer Free With Every Tire. State whether you want solid or clincher, plain or non-skid. Send \$2 deposit for each tire ordered, balance C.O.D., subject to examination, or 5 percent discount if full amount.

UNION RUBBER COMPANY
Dept. 132, Racine Ave. & 15th St., CHICAGO

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements



"I certainly like the comfort of a soft collar, but—it looks so sloppy."

"Not necessarily! Look at mine. I wear the



Hol-Tite

PAT. FEB. 18, 1918

COLLAR HOLDER

Holds Tight But Makes No Holes

YOUR comfortable soft collars need no longer worry you with their untidy lines and slovenly fit. An inconspicuous Hol-Tite makes any soft collar as natty and well-fitting as a stiff one.

Preserves the comfort—adds the well-dressed appearance every man desires.

*Haberdashers and Jewelers
Supply the Hol-Tite
Priced from 50 cents to \$5.00*



Hol-Tite

PAT. FEB. 18, 1918

COLLAR HOLDER

INCONSPICUOUS when worn, but holds the soft collar in firm graceful lines. The grip will not shake loose, and there are no prongs, pins or sharp edges to wear or puncture the collar.

Insist upon getting the genuine "Hol-Tite."

HOLD TIGHT COLLAR HOLDER CO., 950 B'WAY, NEW YORK

DIAMONDS ON CREDIT

Send for **FREE** Catalog No. 98M—showing the largest assortment of the most exquisite Jewelry, Genuine Diamonds, standard makes of Watches, Silverware and French Ivory Toiletware. Everything at rock bottom prices—ten months to pay on anything. Address Dept. 98M.



Sweet's Capital \$1,000,000

L. W. SWEET, Inc., 1650-1660 Broadway, New York City



PARKER'S HAIR BALSAM

A toilet preparation of merit. Helps to eradicate dandruff.

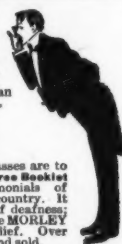
For Restoring Color and Beauty to Gray and Faded Hair. 50c. and \$1.00 at druggists.

HINDERCORNS Removes Corns, Callouses, etc., stops all pain, ensures comfort to the feet, makes walking easy. 15 cents by mail or at Druggists. Hiseox Chemical Works, Patchogue, N. Y.

"DON'T SHOUT"



"I can hear you with the MORLEY PHONE." It is invisible, weightless, comfortable, inexpensive. No metal, wires nor rubber. Can be used by anyone, young or old. The Morley Phone for the



DEAF

is to the ears what glasses are to the eyes. Write for Free Booklet containing testimonials of users all over the country. It describes causes of deafness; tells how and why the MORLEY PHONE affords relief. Over one hundred thousand sold.

THE MORLEY CO., Dept. 758, 26 S. 15 St., Phila.

:: POCKET EDITIONS ::

USEFUL SUBJECTS 15c. EACH

Sheldon's Twentieth Century Letter Writer; Sheldon's Guide to Etiquette; Physical Health Culture; National Dream Book; Zingara Fortune Teller; The Key to Hypnotism; Heart Talks With the Lovelorn; Frank Merriwell's Book of Physical Development.

Street & Smith Corporation, Publishers
79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City



Saved \$64.00 On a Diamond

A Nevada customer writes: "\$188.00 diamond appraised at \$220.50. Sold it for \$188.00."—(Name on request.)

This firm nearly X century old, rated over \$1,000,000.00, lends money on high grade jewelry. Amazing bargains in unpaid loan diamonds. Free examination.

Why Pay Full Prices

Prove for yourself that it's unnecessary. Send your name for wonderful list free. Every jewel accurately described in detail. Radically different from catalogs. See these prices before you buy.

Send for Latest List

Diamond Loans Most sell unpaid loans. Hundreds of diamonds for under market prices. Free examinations. Amazing bargains proved by customers' letters. Write today.

JOS. DeROY & SONS, 8864 DeRoy Bldg.

Only Opposite Post Office Pittsburgh, Pa.

Reference by certificate: Bank of Pittsburgh, N. A., Marine National Bank, Union Trust Company, Pittsburgh, Pa.



Did YOU Enjoy This Magazine



WE have striven very conscientiously to give you an honest, clean-cut, interesting magazine. If you think that our effort has been successful, will you not help a good thing along by telling your friends where good fiction of uniform quality may be found?

By doing so you will favor your friends as well as the publishers.



Street & Smith Corporation
Publishers
New York City

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements



ONLY



DOWN

for This Complete Bed Outfit

Send only \$1.00 with the coupon and we will ship you this complete three piece bed outfit immediately. This complete outfit is absolutely guaranteed. Order it shipped to your home today. Examine the outfit thoroughly. If at the end of 30 days you are not entirely satisfied, return it to us and we will at once refund your dollar and any freight charges you have paid.

Order by No. A-105. Only \$1.00 with coupon and the balance in small monthly payments of \$2.50; total price \$24.50. Remember our supply is limited, so send the coupon today.

Bed, Mattress and Spring

The Bed is a handsome continuous post design, massive in appearance and dependable in construction. The continuous posts and gracefully curved top rail are rigidly fastened to the cross rails. The bed is full size, 4 feet 6 in. The head is 49 in. high, and the foot end is 27 1/2 inches high. Comes in Verne Martin gold finish.

The Mattress is 50-lb. weight, durable and comfortable. It is padded at top and bottom with a soft resilient fibre, making it reversible and giving double service. Excellent quality ticking, neatly tufted.

The Spring is guaranteed. The heavy posts of the bed with tongue and groove joints. The guaranteed spring fabric is always kept perfectly stretched by means of helical springs which are also anchored in the end angle irons.

If Not Satisfied Money Refunded

Order complete bed outfit shipped to your home today. If, at the end of 30 days you are not entirely satisfied with it, return it at our expense and we will refund your dollar and any freight charges you paid. No special discount for cash from this advertised price.

Just \$1 and Coupon!

We will also send our big bargain catalog listing thousands of amazing household bargains. Any of them will be sold to you for only a small first payment and the balance in easy monthly payments. Read coupon and mail it today.

L. FISH FURNITURE CO., Dept. A141, CHICAGO

L. FISH FURNITURE CO., Dept. A141, Chicago

Enclosed find \$1.00. Ship special advertised Complete Bed Outfit No. A-105. I am to have 30 days free trial. If I keep the outfit I will pay you \$2.50 a month. If not satisfied, I am to return the complete bed outfit within 30 days and you are to refund my money and any freight charges I paid.

☐ Complete Bed Outfit No. A-105. \$24.50.

Name

Address

Post Office State

If you only want Furniture, Rug, Stove, Photograph, Watch and General Household Catalog, Put X in box ☐

Money Back If Not Satisfied



Mail Coupon Now!

The Most Remarkable Story of Our Time

Around the World in Eighty Hours



By WILLIAM WALLACE COOK

Opening Chapters in the July 15th Issue of

The Top-Notch Magazine

(Out on the date that it bears)

To be obtained for a little while wherever magazines are sold.
Fifteen cents a copy. It is a brisk seller.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

Velvet Grip Hose Supporter

"Sew-Ons"

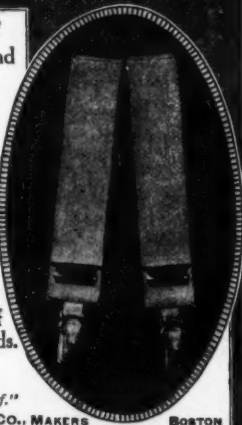
can be quickly and easily attached to any style of corset.

The unique VELVET GRIP feature of the "Sew-On" — an all-rubber, oblong button — is proof against "slips" and the ruthless ripping of silken hose threads.

Look for the Oblong Rubber Button — "The Button that Talks for Itself."

GEORGE FROST CO., MAKERS

BOSTON



"At Last—a Real Job and Real Money!"

"And if only I'd started earlier, I could have had them five years ago. I didn't realize at first what spare time study would do for a man. Taking up that I. C. S. course marked the real beginning of my success. In three months I received my first promotion. But I kept right on studying and I've been climbing ever since."

Every mail brings letters from some of the two million students of the International Correspondence Schools telling of advancements and increased salaries won through spare time study. How much longer are you going to wait before taking the step that is bound to bring you more money? Isn't it better to start now than to wait five years and then realize what the delay has cost you?

One hour after supper each night spent with the I. C. S. in the quiet of your own home will prepare you for the position you want in the work you like best.

Yes, it will! Put it up to us to prove it. Without cost, without obligation, just mark and mail this coupon.

TEAR OUT HERE

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS BOX 3498, SCRANTON, PA.

Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, before which I mark X.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTRICAL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> SALESMANSHIP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Lighting and Railways | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVERTISING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Wiring | <input type="checkbox"/> Window Trimmer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telegraph Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> Show Card Writer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Painter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MECHANICAL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> Railroad Trainman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> ILLUSTRATING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Machine Shop Practice | <input type="checkbox"/> Cartooning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toolmaker | <input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS MANAGEMENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engine Operating | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Secretary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> BOOKKEEPER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying and Mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> Stenographer and Typist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MINE FOREMAN OR ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> Cert. Public Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STATIONARY ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> TRAFFIC MANAGER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ship Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECT | <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD ENGLISH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor and Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> Common School Subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL SERVICE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLUMBING AND HEATING | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Mail Clerk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> AUTOMOBILE OPERATING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Overseer or Supt. | <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Repairing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHEMIST | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinary Baling |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> French |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian |

Name _____
 Present _____
 Occupation _____
 Street _____
 and No. _____
 City _____ State _____

7-25-19

Earn \$35-\$125 a Wk

Your Opportunity in MECHANICAL DENTISTRY

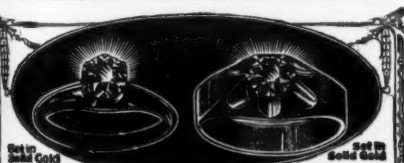
A pleasant, dignified profession. Taught by actual practice. Modern laboratories. Three months' course—day or evening. No previous knowledge or experience required. No charge for tools or equipment. The men we train are in demand. Established 27 years. Country-wide recognition. Write today for free catalog No. 26.

BODEE SCHOOLS OF MECHANICAL DENTISTRY

NEW YORK
15 W. 44th St.

PHILADELPHIA
15 12th and Walnut Sts.

BROOKLYN
15 Flatbush Ave.



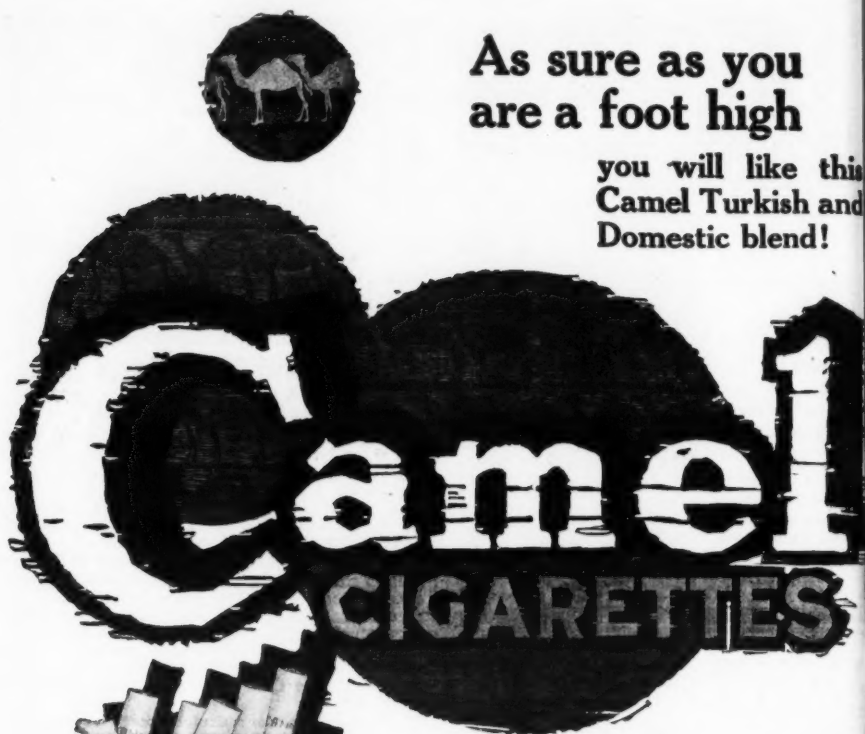
Send Your Name and We'll Send You a Lachnite

DON'T send a penny. Send your name and receive also and say, "Send me a Lachnite mounted in a solid 14 K ring on 10 days' free trial." We'll send it prepaid right to your house. When it comes merely deposit \$4. in with the ringman and then wear the ring for 10 full days. If you, or if any of your friends can tell it from a diamond, send it back. If you decide to keep it—send \$2. in a month until \$14. in has been paid. Write Today Send your name now. Tell us which of the solid gold rings illustrated above you wish (circle or men's). Be sure to send your finger size.

Bureau Lachnite Co. 22 N. Michigan Ave., Dept. A70 CHICAGO

As sure as you
are a foot high

you will like this
Camel Turkish and
Domestic blend!



Camels are sold everywhere in
scientifically sealed packages of
20 cigarettes for 20 cents; or
ten packages (200 cigarettes) in
a glassine-paper-covered carton.
We strongly recommend this
carton for the home or office
supply or when you travel.

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.
Winston-Salem, N. C.

YOU will prefer Camels smooth
and choice Domestic tobaccos to
either kind smoked straight! It gives
you an entirely new idea of cigarette
enjoyment.

Camels never tire your taste no
matter how liberally you smoke.
They are always appetizing — and
satisfying, because they have a desir-
able, mellow body.

Camels leave no unpleasant ciga-
retty after taste nor unpleasant
cigarette odor. In fact, every angle
you get on Camels is so different
from any other cigarette that you will
be won as you were never won before.

That's why we say frankly — com-
pare Camels with any cigarette in the
world at any price! We know the
answer!

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements



The Gloves of a Thousand Uses

RAILROADERS, teamsters, builders, motormen, farmers, packers, movers, janitors, linemen, deck-hands, plasterers, street cleaners, gardeners, ash collectors, stone masons, pilots, painters, truck drivers, lumbermen,

—ironworkers, pavers, bricklayers, carpenters, stokers, machinists, foundrymen, everyone, man, woman or child, who does any hand work of any kind should wear Boss Work Gloves. They protect from dust, dirt, grease, paint, and minor injuries. They are economically priced to suit every purse.

Boss Work Gloves are heavy and tough enough to wear well through the hardest kind of usage—yet they are flexible enough to permit a thorough “feel” of the work in hand.

They are easy to slip on and off.
And they come in different weights adaptable to every conceivable requirement with band, ribbed, or gauntlet wrists. Sizes for men and women, boys and girls.

Ask your dealer for a pair of these Gloves of a Thousand Uses. Look over the four best sellers listed below:

THE BOSS MEEDY—The world's favorite work glove for odd jobs around the house and garden, and all light hand-work. Made of the best quality, medium weight canton flannel.

THE BOSS HEVY—The best bet for all work that requires a strong, wear-resisting glove. Made of the very best quality, heavy weight canton flannel.

THE BOSS XTRA HEVY—The world's champion heavy-weight hand-wear for rough work. Made of the finest grade of extra heavy canton flannel.

THE BOSS WALLOPER—This is the super work glove. Strong, flexible and built for rugged work. Made of the highest quality, heaviest weight canton flannel.

The Boss line includes highest quality leather-palm, jersey, ticking, and canton flannel gloves and mittens.

THE BOSS MANUFACTURING CO., Kewanee, Ill.



Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements



This is the sign that identifies dealers showing the Eveready Daylo \$10,000 Contest Picture. Look for this sign on dealers' windows

Three Thousand Dollars For Somebody. YOU?

THREE thousand dollars in cash for one person; a thousand dollars for another; five hundred for each of three other people and ninety-nine other cash prizes two hundred to ten dollars. *Ten thousand dollars in all!* How much for YOU?

This latest Eveready Daylo Contest will break all contest records. Anyone may enter—it costs nothing; there is no obligation of any kind. Men, women, boys and girls all have equal chances for any of the 104 cash prizes.

On June 1st, Daylo dealers throughout the United States and Canada will display the new Daylo contest Picture in their windows. Go to the store of a Daylo dealer and study the picture. Secure a contest blank, which the dealer will give you, and write on it what you think the letter says. Use 12 words or less. For the best answer that conforms to the contest rules, the winner will receive \$3000.00 in cash.

Get an early look at the picture. Submit as many answers as you wish. Contest blanks are free at all Daylo dealers. All answers must be mailed before midnight, August 1st, 1920.

A3114

another
EVEREADY
contest!
10000⁰⁰ In Cash Prizes

1 First Prize	\$3000.00
1 Second Prize	1000.00
3 Prizes—\$500.00 each	1500.00
4 Prizes—\$250.00 each	1000.00
5 Prizes—\$200.00 each	1000.00
10 Prizes—\$100.00 each	1000.00
10 Prizes—\$ 50.00 each	500.00
20 Prizes—\$ 25.00 each	500.00
50 Prizes—\$ 10.00 each	500.00

104 Prizes Total \$10,000.00

Answers will be judged by the editors of "LIFE" and contestants must abide by their judgment.

If two or more contestants submit the identical answer selected by the judges for any prize, the full amount of the prize will be paid to each.

Contest begins June 1, 1920, and ends Midnight, August 1, 1920. Postmarks on letters will determine if letter has been mailed before close of contest.

Answers must contain not more than 12 words. Hyphenated words count as one word.

Complete Contest Rules are printed on Contest Blank. Ask Daylo dealers for them.



Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

They work
naturally
and form
no habit

They work
naturally
and form
no habit

They work
naturally
and form
no habit

They work
naturally
and form
no habit

At the 8000
Rexall
Stores only

8 for 10¢
24 for 25¢
60 for 50¢



**MAKES
STURDY
LEGS**

CUT HERE

Run a sharp knife along the dotted line and square edges to make it gap. See that the gap is closed after the required amount of food is poured out. Don't cut top off.

Grape-Nuts

REGISTERED IN UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

Made of Wheat and Barley

MANUFACTURED BY

Postum Cereal Company

Battle Creek, Mich., U.S.A.

A FOOD

Containing the natural nutritive elements of these field grains thoroughly and scientifically baked.

ECONOMY

Four heaping teaspoonfuls of GRAPE-NUTS for the cereal part of a meal is sufficient for an ordinary person. More may be used if desired.

NET WEIGHT TWELVE OZS.

Grape-Nuts

**A wonderful food for
Children and Grown-ups**

